

Thursday June 18 1998

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| <p> World Cup Australia 0.50 Argentina 0.50 Belgium 0.50 Brazil 0.50 Canada 0.50 Czech Republic 0.50 Denmark 0.50 England 0.50 France 0.50 Germany 0.50 Greece 0.50 Hungary 0.50 Italy 0.50 Japan 0.50 Korea 0.50 Mexico 0.50 Netherlands 0.50 Norway 0.50 Poland 0.50 Portugal 0.50 Romania 0.50 Scotland 0.50 Slovakia 0.50 Slovenia 0.50 Spain 0.50 Sweden 0.50 Switzerland 0.50 Turkey 0.50 Ukraine 0.50 USA 0.50 </p> | <p> Other Albania 0.50 Armenia 0.50 Azerbaijan 0.50 Belarus 0.50 Bulgaria 0.50 Cambodia 0.50 China 0.50 Cyprus 0.50 Estonia 0.50 Georgia 0.50 Hong Kong 0.50 India 0.50 Indonesia 0.50 Israel 0.50 Kazakhstan 0.50 Kyrgyzstan 0.50 Latvia 0.50 Lithuania 0.50 Macedonia 0.50 Maldives 0.50 Malta 0.50 Moldova 0.50 Monaco 0.50 Montenegro 0.50 Myanmar 0.50 Nepal 0.50 New Zealand 0.50 Oman 0.50 Pakistan 0.50 Papua New Guinea 0.50 Philippines 0.50 Qatar 0.50 Russia 0.50 Singapore 0.50 South Africa 0.50 South Korea 0.50 Sri Lanka 0.50 Taiwan 0.50 Tajikistan 0.50 Thailand 0.50 Timor 0.50 Trinidad and Tobago 0.50 Uzbekistan 0.50 Vietnam 0.50 Wales 0.50 Yemen 0.50 Zambia 0.50 Zimbabwe 0.50 </p> |
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The Guardian

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Cricket as it happens

Sport reports

World Cup, Ascot...

Pages 12-16

Cover story

Who lives in Middle England?

G2 with European weather

OnLine

Talk is cheap

G2 page 12

Trident warheads to be cut by half

Ethical policy gesture to world

Ian Black and Richard Norton-Taylor

THE Government will attempt next month to revive its concept of an ethical foreign policy and give a lead to the world by unilaterally cutting up to half of Britain's Trident nuclear warheads.

The initiative comes after last month's furore over India and Pakistan's series of tit-for-tat nuclear tests, when Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, promised "ambitious and practical" plans for arms control.

and was absent from the party's election manifesto. The Foreign Office has been keen to promote its disarmament agenda since the Indian and Pakistani tests brought angry charges that the five "official" nuclear powers — the US, Russia, China, Britain and France — had squandered post-Cold War opportunities to make progress on reducing their arsenals.

Britain is already the smallest of the Big Five. George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, will announce the warhead cuts in the long-delayed Strategic Defence Review, agreed by the MoD and the Foreign Office, the Guardian has learned.

66 warheads, though a fourth Trident will be brought into service in August. "If the Government reduces Trident to no more than 48 warheads each, it would be a genuine and welcome act of nuclear disarmament", Stephen Pullinger, executive director of the International Security Information Service, said yesterday.

But lobbyists who wanted to see a stronger commitment to disarmament will be disappointed that the Government has not gone further. At the moment there is always at least one Trident on 24-hour patrol.

Rebecca Johnson, of the Arms Control Institute, said: "The acid test of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) is whether Britain's actions promote a larger understanding of international security or whether we carry on trying to punch above our weight and con-

tinue to broadcast the Cold War message that nuclear weapons are necessary for security. So far it looks as if the SDR will fail this test." But Professor Paul Rogers of Bradford University's school of peace studies, said: "If the Government is open about the number of warheads it plans to deploy, it will be something new. If it decides to mothball one of the Trident submarines, it will be quite significant."

Met admits shame over Lawrence

David Pallister

THE Metropolitan police commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, yesterday made an unprecedented apology to the parents of the murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence for failing to bring his killers to justice.



'Mr Lawrence, I am truly sorry we let you down. On behalf of the Metropolitan police, I offer my apologies'

Ian Johnston, assistant commissioner, Metropolitan police

we have handled the case. "I can understand and explain some of what went wrong. A great deal has changed and yet will change. We have tried over the last four years since the first investigation to show imagination and determination to prosecute Stephen's killers."

Mr Lawrence's statement, read out by Sarah Grover, the co-ordinator of the family support group, said: "It has taken five years of trauma, heartache and suffering for our family to reach this stage of our struggle. The commissioner now accepts that the first investigation was flawed and incompetent."

"What will happen to those officers? Will they be disciplined? Will those now retired lose their pensions? Maybe we need another public inquiry into police corruption and a new conclusion of an internal Met review which found that the investigation had been carried out satisfactorily."



Attired for a day at the races, a gentleman waits the departure of his Ascot train from Waterloo yesterday. Sport, pages 12 and 13. PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL VICENTE

Sack hooligans, Blair tells employers

PM steps into 'legal minefield' in bid to curb World Cup violence

Even MacAskill and Stuart Miller

TONY BLAIR yesterday urged employers to sack or impose other severe sanctions on staff convicted of hooliganism in France.

Confederation of British Industry, representing the private sector, shared its views on punishing hooligans. But a CBI source described Mr Blair's initiative as a "legal minefield". Employers' organisations, civil servants and lawyers cautioned against the difficulty of sacking a worker for a conviction overseas, saying an employer would be open to legal challenge. "The onus would be on the employer to prove that the company's reputation was being damaged."

four-month prison sentences, while two Germans involved in disturbances before their team's match against the United States were given three-month sentences. More than 100 people remain in custody in Marseille.

among those arrested, adding the caution that he had pleaded not guilty. Adair Turner, director-general of the CBI, said: "Employers will have to look at the individual circumstances, but clearly if they believe proven hooliganism could impact on the reputation of their business or is relevant to the suitability of individuals to deal with customers or work well with fellow employees, they may wish to consider a range of appropriate actions."

The Prime Minister said he was open to suggestions for tackling hooliganism, including Conservative proposals for restricting hooligans from travelling abroad and forcing them to pay for damage. As Mr Blair praised the Scottish fans for their good behaviour, claims by the maverick Conservative Alan Clark that the England hooligans were the victims of prejudice were greeted with widespread derision.

TO MY DAD

The edible Father's Day card.

Special TOBLERONE Father's Day packs available from all leading confectioners.

Sketch

A Major role for Blair? Oh yes



Simon Hoggart

"I've just realised who Tony Blair's surprise role model is: John Major."

We should have spotted it a long time ago. The peevishness when he is challenged. The upside-down logic. The petulant claim that broken promises don't matter, because his intentions are so good. Mr Major used to say that it didn't matter that he had broken his campaign promises by raising taxes because the Conservatives were the party of low taxation.

Similarly Mr Blair argues that with the NHS it's the thought that counts. Waiting lists may be rising by hundreds per day, but the Labour Party genuinely intends to bring them down. Beside this passionate commitment to improve things, failure is a mere detail.

Close your eyes and you could actually be listening to Mr Major. An "Oh yes" even escaped the prime ministerial lips yesterday during his statement on the EU summit.

Soon we will notice other similarities, as in that sinister story about Dr Jekyll and Dr Jekyll. Mr Blair will take to wearing horn-rimmed glasses, and a pale, ghostly moustache will appear on his upper lip.

Norman Baker (Lib Dem, Lewes) referred to the Government's decision to privatise air traffic control, in spite of its election promise. The Tory proposal to do this had been called by Labour, during the last campaign, "an own goal which shows how out of touch the Conservative government is". It would undermine confidence in air safety.

"Does the Prime Minister now agree with himself?"

The Prime Minister did agree with himself, both now and then. Why Labour had promised to do this was necessary to right the public finances and improve investment. He supposed,

sarcastically, that Lib Dem opposition to this plan represented yet another of their spending commitments!

It was a nice Majorish touch. The trick is, when someone points out that you have just announced that you intend to do the precise opposite of what you have promised, to sound peeved, as if they are deliberately missing the point and that in some mysterious way it is their fault.

Next we moved on to football hooligans, and how it was that all the elaborate security measures and intelligence reports had failed to do any good in Marseille. Mr Blair brought up a fine Majorism. "We can stop known hooligans if they are known," he said twice, in a phrase which like the great Majorisms has an almost Zen quality to it.

Later he announced gravely: "Let us be quite clear where responsibility for this violence lies. It lies with those individuals themselves who do not represent the best of Britain, England or English soccer."

"Do not represent the best?"

In the same way, the Waffen SS did not represent the finest flowering of German culture, and the Ku Klux Klan of Jasper County are not in the great tradition of American democratic egalitarianism. It is what we grammarians call *li-totes major* — the use of understatement to create a banal effect.

I have a mental picture of Mr Blair sitting in a cricket ground somewhere, watching the rain fall on the covers and listening to Prime Minister's Questions on his Walkman, a quiet, satisfied smile upon his face.

The other day I suggested that we needed a Tory MP to describe our hooligans as being in the same mould as the bowmen of Agincourt. Cometh the hour, cometh the old friend Alan Clark, who spoke glowingly of the world's finest hooligans on Radio 4 yesterday.

Of course he said they had the right to defend themselves. "If someone throws a bottle at you, what are you meant to do? Hand it back and say, 'I'm sorry, you have lost your bottle'?"

But what if that Clark may not realise that these are empty bottles, and are not filled with Ch Margaux '64.

Victim's parents launch civil action to prevent au pair spending any money made from selling story

Woodward back home today

Joanna Cole in New York and Luke Harding

LOUISE Woodward, convicted of killing eight-month-old Matthew Eappen, was due to arrive back in Britain this morning as the baby's parents, Sunil and Deborah Eappen, vowed to pursue her and stop her spending any money she might make from selling her story.

It is the first time Woodward has returned to Britain since she arrived in the United States as an au pair almost two years ago.

Though criminal proceedings against her are now officially over after the Supreme Court of Massachusetts agreed on Tuesday to uphold her manslaughter conviction and controversial time-served sentence, civil proceedings began in earnest.

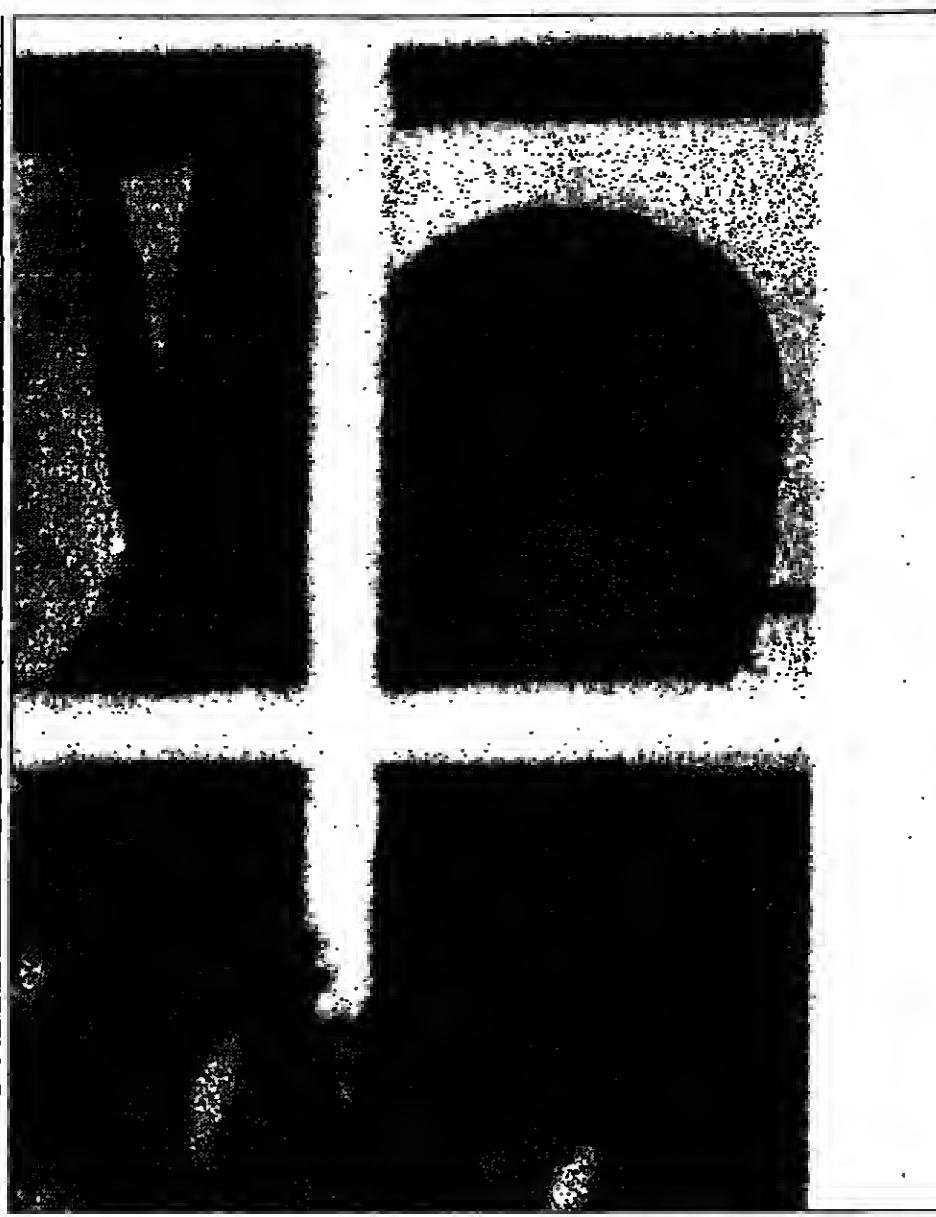
As Woodward left the Boston home where she has been staying for the past six weeks, the Eappens appeared in Massachusetts Federal Court and were promptly granted a preliminary injunction against the au pair to prevent her from spending any money she might receive if she sells her story.

It was not immediately clear whether the injunction would prove workable if she does agree to a financial deal in Britain, because there is no civil extradition agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Eappens also filed a wrongful death suit against her and are seeking \$75,000 (£45,000) in compensatory damages for Matthew's life. It is quite common in civil cases where babies are involved to keep the compensatory figure low, as it is symbolic rather than financial.

The Eappens are also seeking an undisclosed sum in punitive damages in a further effort to stop her from selling her story.

Mr Eappen's lawyer, Frederick L. Ellis, stressed that the chief reason for filing the lawsuit was not revenge but to stop the au pair profiting from Matthew's death. Since Woodward's trial began last month, there have been many attempts to buy her story and according to Elaine Whitfield Sharp, one of Woodward's lawyers who was sacked earlier this month, the



Waiting to leave: Woodward at the window of the Massachusetts house where she has been staying. PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD BAILEY

au pair's family have been in negotiations to sell her story in the last month.

It appeared last night that the Woodward had backed away from a newspaper deal, in a statement, the au pair's British solicitor, Paul Barrow, said she would return home immediately, adding:

"Contrary to speculation, she will not be going into hiding at the behest of any national newspaper or media organisation."

The Daily Mail, which was leading the tabloid pack for Louise's story, yesterday denied it had struck a deal with her or her family. In November, following Woodward's conviction for second-degree murder, the paper is believed to have paid \$40,000 to her parents, Gary and Sue, for an exclusive interview.

The saga has not left the Woodward family hugely out of pocket. Despite a lengthy legal fight, most of the Woodward's expenses were met by donations from well-wishers

which at one stage topped \$200,000. The fund is now down to \$19,000, although money continues to arrive.

In court yesterday, the Eappens' lawyers were armed with hundreds of media reports which claim that the au pair has received scores of offers.

"We want to do all we can so this never happens again," said Mrs Eappen. "If there is any financial gain from this case it should all go toward educating people about child

abuse, about shaken baby syndrome. There is so much denial we need to get over. I hope the foundation can do that."

The civil case will mean that the evidence is played out again by both sides, in front of a civil jury. But unlike in a criminal case, where the jury must feel confident that the evidence is beyond all reasonable doubt, the jury in a civil case can rely only on "a preponderance of evidence".

Lord Browne-Wilkinson, chairing the hearing, said evidence had been submitted that there had been "enormous growth" in legal aid fees, which were rising at a rate "miles above inflation".

He said it appeared the whole system of fixing fees may need to be reformed.

Lawrence Collins, QC for the Law Society, which represents solicitors, suggested that barristers' legal aid earnings should be pegged to those of NHS consultants with top merit awards, who earn around £12,000 a year. That would mean gross fees of no more than £200,000 a year for the top criminal barristers. At present some earn £300,000-400,000 a year.

The hearing continues today.



Yellow ribbons welcome Woodward back to Elton

'If there is any financial gain from this case it should all go toward educating people about child abuse, about shaken baby syndrome' Deborah Eappen

Christie

robber faces former Christie in 'libel case over de magazine. Sarah Hall reports

THE ALLEGEDLY "robber" faces former Christie in 'libel case over de magazine. Sarah Hall reports

Review

Boys in the band with no baggage

Caroline Sullivan

Hanson
Wembley Arena

AN INFLATABLE frog

hurled from above clips on the shoulder. Its stomach bears the felt-tipped plea, "If I find me, please help me get the stage". Faced with such naked desperation, what can you do but lend a hand?

But it landed in the middle of the screaming, hyperventilating crowd, who were just then sobbing and writhing as Taylor Hanson remarked: "You guys are awesome!"

Ladies and gentlemen, Hanson and their followers.

But things were not entirely rosy at their first UK gig. The chart-topping Oklahoma boy band (see last year's single, MMBop) had exercised some high-handed tactics toward their support band, chart-topping Irish girl band B'witched (see last week's hit, C'est La Vie). Just four days before the show, Hanson evicted B'witched on the grounds that the latter did not play their own instruments. The girls were replaced by an obscure indie group, Hillman Mix, though the uniformly juvenile Wembley fans undoubtedly would have preferred things as they were.

Such pomposity is unbecoming in a band who had to get Mum's permission to stay up late to do this show. If siblings Isaac, 17, Taylor, 15, and shouty little Zac, 12, are this stuffy now, what will they be like when they're old enough to go out unchaperoned?

Mind, we should have seen it coming: their latest album is a compilation of early songs titled, with touching word-of-mouth toughness, The Indie Recordings.

But at least they put their guitars where their mouth is. They do indeed play their own instruments. Zac bashes with ceaseless energy at a drum kit scaled down to his stature. Taylor pounds a keyboard like an underaged Jerry Lee Lewis and Isaac, who's going through an awkward skin-and-bone stage, is the guitarist. There's also a discreet coterie of full-sized backing musicians. They're almost unrecognisable, as Hanson make quite enough of a racket on their own.

The way they see it is that they're a proper group and want to be treated as such. They don't mind the fans' love-hate, which are mostly directed at Taylor, but they would rather be listened to than screamed at. So we listened. A bit.

It was hard to make out much above the smashing girl-teeth and drumming girl-feet, but you could just about discern that the Hansons play capably, sing passably and whip up some nifty harmonies. There's also an acoustic hit where Taylor and Zac gather round Isaac's acoustic guitar and yodel along like old hippies. It's difficult to understand their teen-dream status, as the black-clad brothers have little stage presence and even less sex appeal.

Still, they're the first boy band in years who are innocent of the usual boy-band baggage, such as matching loincloths, twitzy choreography and jumbo video screens.

There's something pleasantly old-fashioned about their determination to prove themselves musically, and the reaction showed that this organic, free-range breed of pop group might be due a revival.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

Legal aid QC's fees cut by half, law lords told

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

SOME of the nine barristers whose legal aid pay claims provoked a House of Lords inquiry had their fees cut by more than half, it emerged yesterday.

But even after the cuts, the Clerk to the Parliaments, Michael Davies, chief executive to the House of Lords, still thought the sums were too high and refused to approve the payments. He referred the case to the law lords, who yesterday began the unprecedented hearing.

One barrister claimed nearly three times what the House of Lords taxing officer, James Vallance White, who assesses claims, regarded as reasonable.

Vera Baird, junior to Michael Mansfield QC in an unsuccessful murder appeal, claimed £22,537.50, more than Mr Mansfield's fees. This was cut to £7,850 by Mr Vallance White. Mr Mansfield's claim was slashed from £22,300 to £12,300.

All the claims covered three to four-day appeals to the House of Lords against murder or grievous bodily harm convictions, plus preparation.

The only successful appeal was by Philip English, jailed for the murder of a police officer although his friend wielded the weapon. His QC, Christopher Salton, had his claim cut from £34,600 to £21,600.

The law lords are expected to lay down guidance for assessing fees in future House of Lords appeals.

How QC's fees were cut

| | What they claimed | What it was cut to |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Michael Mansfield QC | £22,300 | £12,300 |
| Vera Baird | £22,537.50 | £7,850 |
| Gordon Ross | £17,287 | £11,412 |
| Christopher Salton QC | £34,600 | £21,600 |
| Julian Knowles | £17,592 | £13,592 |
| Peter Fehring QC | £37,000 | £16,000 |
| Benjamin Squirell | £35,943 | £15,823 |
| Richard Henriques QC | £28,500 | not yet decided |
| Ian McWeekin | £18,750 | not yet decided |

The inquiry covers only House of Lords criminal appeals, of which there are only between six and 10 a year. But if they decide fees should be

linked to the incomes of other professionals, this could lead to a dramatic drop in top barristers' incomes.

Richard Henriques, one of

the QCs whose fees are under scrutiny, led the league table of barristers' earnings from legal aid in 1995-96 with more than £500,000, though he later said this related to more than one year.

Sydney Kentridge QC, representing the Bar Council, told the law lords that officials who determine fees — taxing masters or taxing officers — had no material on which to relate an individual bill to a reasonable annual income. "The idea that a taxing master should take into account what a proper annual income should be for a barrister is verging on the absurd, in the idea that he should also inform himself about what surgeons earn goes over the line of absurdity."

Mr Kentridge said any such move would be a matter for

parliament or government or a committee of inquiry.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson, chairing the hearing, said evidence had been submitted that there had been "enormous growth" in legal aid fees, which were rising at a rate "miles above inflation".

He said it appeared the whole system of fixing fees may need to be reformed.

Lawrence Collins, QC for the Law Society, which represents solicitors, suggested that barristers' legal aid earnings should be pegged to those of NHS consultants with top merit awards, who earn around £12,000 a year. That would mean gross fees of no more than £200,000 a year for the top criminal barristers. At present some earn £300,000-400,000 a year.

The hearing continues today.

Peanut allergy warning Ex-MP editor 'hit woman'

Sarah Boswell
Health Correspondent

PREGNANT women and breast-feeding mothers should not eat peanut products if family members suffer allergies such as asthma, eczema or hay fever, the Government warned yesterday.

The advice, which the Chief Medical Officer, Kenneth Calman, stressed was precautionary, is aimed at up to a third of pregnant women — some 250,000.

Peanuts can provoke the life-threatening reaction anaphylaxis. Even a minute trace of peanut can cause swelling of the lips and throat which leads to difficulty breathing or swallowing. Victims may become unconscious. Between five and seven people

die every year. There are fears that children from families with a history of allergies may be becoming sensitised to peanuts through exposure in the womb or while breast-feeding.

The Government's Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) said yesterday that although there was no conclusive proof that the peanut allergy could pass to the child in the womb, it would be wise to take precautions.

Sir Kenneth said: "The committee is advising that pregnant or breast-feeding women who suffer from diagnosed allergic conditions, or where the father or any brother or sister of the child has a clinical history of such conditions, may wish to avoid eating peanuts and foods con-

taining peanut products. There is no reason for pregnant or nursing mothers who do not fall into this category to avoid eating peanuts."

Children from families with allergic histories should not have peanut products until they are at least three, the committee advises, and no child should be given whole peanuts until they are over five.

Leaflets advising families of the dangers of peanuts are to be distributed through GP surgeries. Avoiding peanut is not easy. Peanuts and peanut oil are used in biscuits, cakes, pastries, desserts, ice cream, breakfast cereal, cereal bars and other food products.

David Reading of the Anaphylaxis Campaign said: "We hope that if this advice is followed scrupulously, peanut allergy will start to go down."

Kamal Ahmed
Media Editor

THE former Conservative health minister Gerry Malone was facing an uncertain future as editor of the European last night after allegations that he hit a female member of staff.

Sources at the magazine said Nicola Davidson had lodged a complaint with Sine Douglas, the managing editor of the paper, after the incident last week.

Ms Davidson, the magazine's assistant editor with responsibility for features, claimed Mr Malone hit her after he had spent the afternoon in the pub watching the Scotland versus Brazil football match.

Andrew Neil, the former editor of the Sunday Times



Gerry Malone: editor of the European faces complaint

and editor-in-chief of the European, is considering his next move. He is a close friend of Mr Malone, whom he made editor earlier this year. Mr Malone, who was

health minister under John Major, lost his Winchester seat at the last general election by two votes.

Mr Malone, who is married, had an altercation with Ms Davidson, who complained that he was making unwarranted advances to her. He put his arm around her waist and around her shoulders.

It is alleged that as she was trying to design pages Mr Malone accused her of "not listening" to him and hit her across the back of the head.

"Maybe he was trying to be playful and it went wrong. It was a real solid hit and she took it as such," one source said.

Mr Malone refused to comment when contacted last night. Ms Davidson also refused to comment.

US intervenes

federal reserve bolsters yen after prime minister's appeal

Washington in Tokyo

THE YEN has risen sharply since the dollar's overnight value of the biggest one-day increase in 10 years. The \$1 billion cost of the yen will be shared between the Japanese and the US.

The yen has risen against the dollar for the first time in three months since last September's peak level.

The fall has been attributed by capital markets to the drop in the Nikkei index to below 15,000 high points of 3,000 this decade.

There has been speculation that the run on the yen has been caused by a new crisis in Asia, drawing in the US and China, and a growth and export slump across the globe in an indication

of a global recession.

The Japanese government has intervened in the market to buy yen and sell dollars, but the intervention has been limited.

The Federal Reserve moved to ease the foreign exchange market by buying yen and selling dollars in New York.

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88

A family of businesses

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Barbican Centre



Christie

□ **Born:** April 1960, in Jamaica.
 □ **Educated:** Henry Compton School, Fulham.
 □ **Career:** Professional runner who has won more medals than any other British athlete.
 □ **High points:** Winning the European 100 metres gold medal in 1986 and becoming the oldest man to win the 100 metres gold at the Barcelona Olympics in 1992. He sprinted to a personal best of 9.87 seconds in the 100 metres event at the World Championships in 1993.
 □ **Low points:** Successfully sued the Metropolitan police for £50,000 in 1998 after being wrongly arrested for stealing a car, which secured his infamous reputation.
 □ **Later points:** He vowed to give up competing in 1991, but carried on running anyway. His poor season of 1995, when he collapsed on track during the World Championships and later revealed that he had constant remarks about his genitalia.
 □ **Was disqualified:** from the 1996 Atlanta Olympics for causing two false starts and later the same year his younger brother Russell was stabbed to death in an argument about crack cocaine.

Christie: he described his route to powerhouse athlete as being through hard work and guidance from his coach — and told how he had campaigned against the use of steroids

PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE HEWITT



McVicar

□ **Born:** 1940 in the East End of London.
 □ **Educated:** Cooper's Company Grammar School, London; Leicester University.
 □ **Career:** Reformed armed robber once regarded as Public Enemy No. 1, who became a student, then a writer.
 □ **High points:** Swimming to freedom through a freezing river after escaping from the high-security Durham Jail in October 1968, part way through a 26-year sentence for armed robbery.
 □ **Turning his back on crime:** and writing his autobiography *McVicar by Himself* in 1974, which was later turned into a film starring Who singer Roger Daltrey. Gaining an education from his prison cell and completing a clutch of O levels and A levels, then a BSc degree in sociology. Continuing his education on his release from prison 20 years ago with a masters degree from Leicester University.
 □ **Low points:** Being recaptured two years after his jailbreak at the flat he shared with his wife, Shirley, and young son, Russell, in south-east London. Being accused — and then cleared — of causing actual bodily harm to a neighbour in an argument over his dog. His son Russell Grant-McVicar being jailed earlier this year for armed robbery.

McVicar: He claimed in an article that Christie showed signs of using steroids to go from 'beampole sprinter' to 'powerhouse' in two years — and that Christie's vanity had revealed the signs

PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL TREACY

Christie weeps as he denies using steroids

Ex-robber faces former champion athlete in libel case over defunct magazine. **Sarah Hall reports**

HE was once the fastest man in the world and, at 5ft 2in and a muscular 14½ stone — the gleaming epitome of manhood. But yesterday Linford Christie, the 1992 Olympic 100 metres champion, revealed a softness behind the steely self-confidence he ascribed as the "major factor" in powering him to the top.

He broke down and wept as he took the stand in the High Court to launch a libel action over allegations that his success was due to illegal, performance-enhancing drugs.

The 38-year-old was taking part in a drama — to be played out over the next three weeks — between two men of extremes: Christie, Britain's greatest athlete, and the reformed armed robber and former boxer John McVicar, aged 58, once Britain's most-wanted man.

The athlete is suing McVicar, who became notorious after his 1986 break-out from Durham jail where he was serving 15 years for robbery, assault and shooting at a police car. The case is over an article headlined "How did Linford get this good?" in the now defunct satirical magazine, *Spiked*, in September 1995.

The printers, Wiltshire (Bristol) Ltd, and distributors Johnsons News Ltd and W H Smith Ltd, are also being sued.

On the first day of action, the drama centred not on McVicar, now a best-selling author, journalist and keen veteran athlete, but on the more internationally renowned figure, the former Olympic champion.

Minutes after taking to the witness box, Christie fell silent, before gripping his lips, weeping and telling the judge: "I am getting a bit emotional."

Breathing heavily, and still distressed after a five-minute adjournment, he battled to tell Mr Justice Popplewell and the jury the reason for his collapse. "It's so hard. I sit here and think why am I here? What am I guilty of? I worked so hard. I worked my arse off... and then people accuse me of cheating."

Linford Christie

go out to do my best. To make people feel good about themselves... so that when they played the national anthem it was British..."

He added: "I worked so hard. I worked my arse off... and then to sit here and

people accuse me of cheating. I just get so emotional about my athletics."

The judge responded: "It is going to be quite a long trial and you are going to have to control your emotion."

The article appeared in the

first issue of the fortnightly publication, said Christie's QC, Patrick Moloney. The "very serious, untrue and damaging" allegation against Christie was tantamount to accusing the athlete of committing a serious crime.

In the article, McVicar, of Battersea, south London, accused Christie of "outwitting the testers for years" and exhibiting "a number of possible effects of performance-enhancing drugs". Not only did he reveal "steroid rage" when confronting journalists, McVicar claimed, but he was guilty of "grandiosity, fixated delusions and a persecution complex" — other side-effects of steroids.

The article implied his metamorphosis from a "beampole sprinter" in 1986 to a "powerhouse" two years later was due to anabolic steroids,

as was his "remarkable physique, in regard to both its bulk and definition".

McVicar's piece continued: "His vanity is such that he is always peeling off his kit and the extraordinary 'cuts' he shows in his torso, especially his abdominals, give rise to suspicion to anyone who knows his way around the bodybuilding circuit: steroids."

Taking the stand, Christie, who retired from professional athletics last year, emphatically denied that he had ever taken performance-enhancing drugs.

He attributed his increase in bulk between 1986 and 1988 to weight training prescribed by his "coach, best friend and second father", Roo Roddam. And he added that he had taken part in several anti-drugs campaigns, had made a

video for the Sports Council warning children off steroids, and had accused journalists, writing about using steroids, of irresponsibility.

The athlete, of Twickenham, south-west London, told the court he had been tested more than 100 times but had only "nearly tested positive" once, in Seoul in 1988, when a tiny quantity of a substance that could be derived from the legal health substance ginseng was detected. He was subsequently cleared.

Mr Moloney told the court: "The libel accuses him of being a cheat... if that were true, his whole life and his whole career would be a sham. All the honour he has achieved would be worth nothing — his career would be a nothing, pointless and dishonest."

The case continues.

US intervenes to rescue Japanese currency

Federal reserve bolsters yen after prime minister's appeal

Alex Brummer in Tokyo

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton last night ordered a dramatic rescue operation for the yen amid concern that the collapse of the Japanese currency could push Japan into depression and undermine the economies of the Pacific region and beyond.

The United States action, led by its central bank — the federal reserve board — came after a personal appeal from the Japanese prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, amid a prolonged weakness of the yen which has sent share prices crashing throughout Asia, putting downward pressure on equity markets in London and New York.

The federal reserve moved into the foreign exchange markets in New York, buying yen for dollars. The Japanese

currency rose sharply to 137 yen to the dollar, against the overnight value of 144 — one of the highest one-day rises of recent times. The estimated \$3 billion cost of the operation will be shared between the US and Japanese authorities.

The yen has plunged 16 per cent against the dollar in the past three months and before yesterday's joint action was half the peak level of 1995. The fall has been accompanied by capital flight from Tokyo that has contributed to the drop in the Nikkei stock index to below 15,000, from a high point of 39,000 earlier this decade.

There has been concern that the run on the yen could spark a new crisis across east Asia, drawing in Hong Kong and China and damaging growth and employment prospects across the globe.

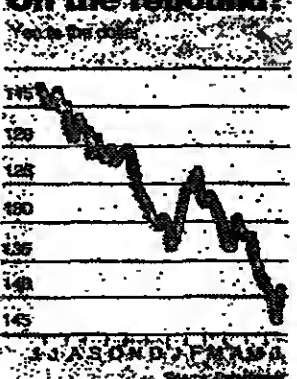
In an indication of the

growing alarm of the international community, the deputy finance ministers of the Group of Seven industrialised powers will convene in Tokyo on Saturday to discuss the "situation on the markets and decide on appropriate responses", according to a French government spokesman. Officials here stress that Japan is only one element on the agenda.

News of the joint rescue sharply bolstered the main stock markets. The FTSE 100, in positive territory through the day, closed at 5832.7 — a rise of 103.0 points. In New York the Dow Jones Industrial Average soared 201.28 points to stand at 8898.57 shortly before the close.

The strength in Western markets followed a stellar technical rebound in Asian stock markets, where trading closed ahead of the intervention. The South Korean share index climbed by 8.5 per cent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose by 6 per cent, after days of heavy falls.

On the rebound?



In the past 48 hours Chinese officials have warned for the first time that the slide in the yen may force it to devalue the renminbi, which would be disastrous for stability in the region.

The rescue agreement came after telephone calls between President Clinton and Mr Hashimoto, who faces national elections on July 11. It came

within hours of the Japanese parliament's approval of a \$124 billion (\$76 billion) rescue package, which had been held up by political infighting.

The US treasury secretary, Robert Rubin, said in a statement that US monetary authorities intervened in co-operation with Japanese monetary authorities "in the context of Japan's plans to strengthen its economy".

Mr Rubin, a sharp critic of Japanese economic policies, added: "We are prepared to continue to co-operate in exchange markets, as appropriate." He said Washington looked forward to the implementation of a comprehensive action programme in Japan to create the conditions "essential for a healthy and prosperous economy".

It is understood that Mr Rubin has sent his deputy, Lawrence Summers, to Tokyo for follow-up talks.

The first indication of the US move came in London dealings, when it was

reported that the federal reserve was selling the dollar at 140 yen. Public intervention by the US central bank is rare, and the dollar was pushed rapidly lower.

The federal reserve is reported to have bought yen on an automatic electronic trading system, which enables traders to see who is at the other end of the trades. The dollar extended its gains against the yen after the US publicly revealed its hand.

But dealers said the relatively small size of the intervention — the Bank of England spent some \$7 billion attempting to prevent sterling's demise in 1992 — indicates that the US authorities are not prepared to spend exorbitant sums to rescue the Japanese currency.

Furthermore, the federal reserve took the unusual step of instructing its preferred dealers to talk freely about its actions, a hint that it prefers to rely more on scare tactics than expensive repeated intervention.

Police shame in Lawrence case

continued from page 1

tective Sergeant David Coles was three times seen by Customs and Excise undercover officers meeting Clifford Norris, the father of one of the suspects in 1988. He was seen with a calculator, exchanging packages.

Norris, Senior, who was wanted for drugs smuggling and suspected of being involved in one murder and an attempted murder, had a reputation for intimidating witnesses and jury nobbling. He is now serving eight years for cannabis importation and possession of guns.

Mr Johnston defended Sir Paul's criticism of the forceful way officers were being questioned. To laughter from the public gallery, he said some had been reduced to tears. The chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, Mike Bennett, spoke of the "tremendous humilia-



tion" which his members had suffered at the hands of the inquiry. His members had not been given the opportunity to fight back, he told BBC Radio 4's World At One.

A BALLET ABOUT DESIRE AND OBSESSION. IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE US, TRY LEAVING HALFWAY THROUGH.

Barbican Centre

"CHEATING, lying, stealing" World premiere by Asafu. Programme also includes "The Rake's Progress" by Ninette de Valois and "Birthday Offering" by Frederick Ashton.

The Royal Ballet at the Barbican, June 15th-20th. Tickets from £9.

Manchester given month to solve school expulsions

John Carrol and David Ward

THE Government yesterday demanded immediate action to protect 140 children expelled from Manchester schools and therefore "potentially at risk" because the local authority has no idea whether any education is being provided for them.

Stephen Byers, the school standards minister, gave the city council a month to present plans for meeting its statutory responsibilities to educate excluded pupils and assess children with special educational needs.

His intervention came as the Office for Standards in Education said the Manchester education authority was "beset with problems", including low attainment by pupils, poor attendance, a waste of surplus places in secondary schools and serious deficits in school budgets.

"Some schools face a spiral of decline," the inspectors said.

But their judgment on the city was less severe than their report last year on the London borough of Hackney where a protracted period of political infighting between Labour factions had left the education service in chaos.

In Manchester, "too many decisions have been put off for too long, so that problems have grown to a size that makes them difficult to tackle". But a new Labour administration took control of the city in 1996 performing "no mistaking the political

will for change and improvement". Councillors had a "clear determination... not to tolerate continued drift".

Mr Byers gave the city until July 17 to tackle the problem of excluded pupils and until September 1 to present a plan to remedy other defects.

"There are 70,000 children in Manchester's schools. They need a far better deal than they are getting," he said.

The report was the first under Ofsted's new statutory powers to inspect all local education authorities. It follows a series of "voluntary" inspections elsewhere.

The inspectors recognised that Manchester education authority was battling a range of social problems, including poverty, inadequate nutrition, poor health and lack of facilities for children to study at home. But they said that that was raising educational attainment all the more vital.

Test and exam results in Manchester schools were improving faster than the national average, but the city was 110th out of 132 local education authorities in English tests at 11, 10th in maths and 27th in GCSE performance.

The authority's contribu-

tion to improvement was judged unsatisfactory in six out of nine secondary schools visited by inspectors, and less than satisfactory in seven out of 16 primary schools.

There were high levels of exclusion and truancy. In 1996/7 the city's schools were excluding almost 10 pupils a day. One secondary school made 782 fixed-term exclusions over three years. In March there were 143 pupils who had been permanently excluded and not placed elsewhere.

The authority could not tell the inspectors what education was being provided for 140 of them.

Roy Jobson, the city's chief education officer, said: "The report needs to be taken seriously, but the commentary that accompanies it seems to have been written to grab headlines. That's a disappointing approach."

Richard Leese, the leader of the council, said it was already addressing most of the weaknesses identified by Ofsted and was consulting on plans to close 17 schools to take out surplus places.

"We said we were going to deal with school budget deficits and we've done it. We said we were going to deal with surplus places and we've done it. We said we were committed to improving educational standards and we are doing that faster than the national average," he said.

Theresa May, the shadow schools minister, said the city should be "chastened of the way it has failed children attending its schools."

'The 70,000 pupils in your schools need a better deal than they're getting'

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The authority's contribu-

Judge 'confused police libel jury'

Owen Bowcott

THE Court of Appeal yesterday reserved judgment in the case of five London police officers who are seeking a retrial of their libel action against the Guardian last year.

During the hearing, counsel for the officers — who all served at Stoke Newington police station — claimed there had been a miscarriage of justice because of the original trial judge's "irredeemably inadequate and confusing summing up" to the jury.

Tom Shields QC, for the policemen, also claimed that details about local "community disquiet" about allegations of corruption at Stoke Newington police station, had been raised in open court by George Carman QC, for the Guardian, when they were no longer relevant to the case.

The action, supported by the Police Federation, is an attempt to reverse the Guardian's libel victory in February last year.

The jury found by a majority in the newspaper's favour that reports about a Scotland Yard internal investigation into events at Stoke Newington police station did not defame any of the five officers.

The inquiry, known as Operation Jackpot, had been triggered by claims from several people accused of drug dealing and eventually led to eight officers being transferred to other stations.

None of the — then unnamed — officers were suspended. None subsequently

faced any criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

The Appeal Court hearing, before the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, Lord Justice Hale, and Lord Justice Walker, pitted the two libel barristers against one another as they dissected each other's record in last year's case.

"I made it clear there should be no reference in the closing speech about public disquiet," Mr Shields complained, "and then it's mentioned."

"I would have publicly failed in my duty if I did not robustly defend his integrity"

After the trial judge, Mr Justice French, had removed the newspaper's defence of qualified privilege, there was no need to mention the record of Duncan Campbell, the paper's crime correspondent, who had written the articles.

"Are you saying there is no reference to the responsibility of the journalist in this [closing] speech at all?" asked Lord Justice Hale.

Mr Shields replied: "Yes. It's no longer relevant at this stage."

Arguing that the trial judge misdirected the jury, Mr Shields maintained that he had "wholly failed" to direct the jury on matters of law.

"A great deal of what was

said was no longer relevant," he said.

But Mr Carman insisted that it was his duty as a barrister to defend the good name of his client, who had walked away from the court and unfairly accused of malicious reporting.

"I would have publicly failed in my duty if I did not robustly and vehemently defend [his] integrity to the jury," he said. It was his only opportunity to do so.

Mr Campbell, he added, had taken great care to canvass numerous sources for his story, and had not hidden the fact that some of them were convicted drug dealers.

The directions submitted by Mr Shields to the judge for inclusion in his final summing up had been almost all directed to the jury in "verbal form".

The jurors, Mr Carman said, were clearly not confused by the judge's summing up since they focused straight away on the issue of what the words complained of actually meant.

A question sent out from the jury room showed they were concentrating on that issue.

Most significantly, Mr Carman said, when legal arguments were made before the judge sent the jury out, Mr Shields did not suggest that there was any danger of a "miscarriage of justice".

Judgment is expected within a few weeks.

Dan Glaister on the first signs of new chairman Robinson's business approach.



Deborah Bull, left, principal dancer at the Royal Ballet and, from top, Anish Kapoor, Joanna MacGregor and Antony Gormley. PHOTOGRAPH BY GRAHAM TURNER

Arts Council staff cuts in view

THE mists surrounding the Government's vision for the future of the arts cleared slightly yesterday with the announcement of six new appointments to the Arts Council of England.

The new appointees — who include the Royal Ballet dancer Deborah Bull and the Turner Prize winners Anish Kapoor and Antony Gormley — will join four existing members on a streamlined ruling body with the final say over a total budget of more than £400 million.

The downsizing of the ruling body from its previous 23 members to 10 is the precursor of reforms scheduled for the autumn aimed at halving the number of permanent staff at the Arts Council from its level of 280.

The changes at the Arts Council are the first tangible products of the appointment by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, of the new chairman, Gerry Robinson as chairman. At Granada, headquarters staff number 32.

Mr Robinson's attempts to reform the Arts Council have already met with opposition, with several prominent advisers resigning in protest last month at what they saw as the erosion of a voice for practitioners in the new structure.

Unlike the previous body, the new 10-member ruling body does not include any

and continuity from the previous council, and new and youthful blood.

Mr Robinson defended his changes against the charge that his appointment presaged a takeover of the arts by businessmen. "Inevitably people thought we were going to fill this half of the council with suits, which was never

'There is artistic breadth and authority, the practitioner perspective... and there is new and youthful blood.'

members of the Arts Council's advisory panels, which will now only have an input into decision-making when invited by Mr Robinson.

Announcing the new appointments, he said: "The membership of the new council delivers exactly the blend that is needed. There is artistic breadth and authority, the practitioner perspective, the regional dimension, experi-

ence and continuity from the previous council, and new and youthful blood."

Mr Robinson would not give a specific number for future staff levels for the Arts Council, saying only: "There's going to be some in-

evitable reduction in numbers." In March he suggested "senior staff with a pool of 50 advisers they can contact when they need them". Yesterday he said 50 to 100 was probably too few.

The new council, which like its predecessor will meet monthly, will not have to endure the day-long meetings that so shocked Mr Robinson on his arrival in May. Meetings will last just two hours.

The reappointed members are: David Brierley, former general manager of the RSC; Christopher Frayling, rector and professor of cultural history at the Royal College of Art; Andrew Motion, poet, biographer and professor of creative writing at the University of East Anglia; Prudence Skene, arts administrator, formerly head of the Arts Council's lottery panel; and Hilary Strong, arts administrator and producer, and rector of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Joan Bakewell, page 8

New blood

ANISH KAPOOR: Sculptor and Turner Prize winner with recent one-man show at the Hayward Gallery.

DEBORAH BULL: Principal dancer at the Royal Ballet since 1992, and a member of the Arts Council's Dance Advisory Panel.

ANTONY GORMLEY: Sculptor who won the Turner Prize in 1994, best-known for his Angel of the North.

DERRICK ANDERSON: Previously deputy director of Yorkshire Arts, now chief executive of Wolverhampton metropolitan borough council.

JOANNA MACGREGOR: Pianist and professor of music at Gresham College, London.

HILARY STRONG: Arts administrator and producer, who is director of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Pierre Victoire in receivership

Amelia Gentleman on a concept that was a recipe for disaster

EVERY good chef needs to be aware of the dangers of serving up too much of a good thing and should be adept at negotiating the fine line between dishing out quantity and quality.

This is a basic lesson which Pierre Levisy, French chef and owner of the bistro chain Pierre Victoire, clearly failed to understand.

The company, which introduced French cuisine at budget prices, has gone into receivership — with debts understood to run to several million.

When M Levisy launched the chain ten years ago, consumers were hungry for the restaurants' trademark rustic atmosphere and cheap French meals. Spurred on by this, M Levisy began a rapid expansion about a year ago — only to discover a few months later that their appetite had already been sated.

The French chef had aimed to expand his business from under 100 branches to more than 300 in the space of five years. As the receivers took over yesterday, M Levisy said: "We made a mistake last year and began to acquire more restaurants than we

could deal with. We grew too fast — we had too many restaurants, not enough skilled staff and not enough financial backing."

"This move should enable the Pierre Victoire name, which I believe people appreciate and like, to go forward with a new start."

The Edinburgh receivers, Grant Thornton, said they had already been contacted by two potential purchasers. A spokesman commented: "The company had undertaken a phenomenal expansion programme — they were opening about one new restaurant a fortnight. A vast, Conranesque restaurant launched in Brussels was a failure and incurred substantial losses. We are still trying to calculate the exact debts."

It is not yet known whether there will be any job losses among the estimated 1,200 staff. Pierre Victoire restaurants are to remain open whilst a buyer is sought.

Pierre Levisy's history is an entrepreneurial success story turned sour. The young chef arrived in Scotland in the mid 1980s with less than £100 to his name. Earlier this year, at the age of 36, he was the owner of an apparently successful restaurant chain with a turnover of millions of

pounds. But signs of strain emerged when he tried, unsuccessfully, to sell all or part of the chain to raise capital to fund expansion.

The news of the collapse came as no surprise to industry insiders who have noted that the large proportion of Pierre Victoire restaurants which were run as franchise operations (83 were franchise-run while just 25 were owned by Pierre Victoire Ltd) meant the quality of the food and service was inconsistent.

The restaurant was dropped from this year's Hardens Restaurant guide, but an earlier review warned: "You may find fantastic value and a good ambience... or you may encounter mediocre cooking and terrible service in a place with zero finesse."

The guide's co-publisher Richard Harden said: "The 1990s has seen a new wave of concept restaurants. Pizza Express and Cafe Rouge have both expanded hugely — competition is now intense."

Pierre Victoire's growth relied on a simple formula — it found cheap premises often left empty by recently bankrupted restaurants and used junk shop furniture to create an unpretentious bistro style.

But the novelty has worn off and even M Levisy conceded that the quality of food and service in some of the branches "could be better". The restaurant's lastington branch was half-empty at lunch time yesterday — despite the offer of a free bottle of wine for any party of four or more diners.

Scientists agog at T rex's giant fossil turd

Jamie Wilson

IN THE scientific world they call it a coprolite, but to the average person it is a fossilised turd. But a rare coprolite discovered in Canada is no ordinary piece of prehistoric poo.

Almost certainly deposited by a Tyrannosaurus rex, scientists believe it has shed new light on the feeding habits of the king of the dinosaurs.

Weighing in at an incredible 1.1 kg and at over 14 feet in length, the fossil is twice the size of any carnivore coprolite found before.

Writing in the *Journal of Nature*, the team of scientists led by Karen Chin, of the United States Geological Survey in Menlo Park, California, and Timothy Tokaryk, of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, were surprised by the nature of the bone fragments which showed that T rex pulverised its prey with repeated bites before swallowing the flesh.

The findings prove that the dinosaur was very different from modern reptiles, which tend to swallow large pieces of prey whole.

Close study of the fragments of the coprolite revealed thick pieces which may have come from a bony "fill", such as that belonging to the three-horned dinosaur triceratops — a favourite prey of T rex. The scientists were puzzled by the discovery that the dinosaur appeared to have trouble digesting the bone it had consumed.

"This rare example of fossilized dietary residues helps to refine our understanding of theropod feeding behaviour by providing physical evidence that a tyrannosaur crushed, consumed and incompletely digested large quantities of bone when feeding on a sub-adult dinosaur," the researchers wrote.

Shades of the grey market enter the retail war

Jamie Wilson

DESIGNER sunglasses yesterday became the latest fashion items to be sold among the frozen peas, soap powders and sun-dried tomatoes of the local supermarket.

In the latest campaign by the big supermarket chains against the "selective distribution" of brand names, Asda has bought £500,000 worth of designer sunglasses including Gucci, Calvin Klein, Armani and Hugo Boss, which they are selling at heavily discounted prices.

The consignments of sunglasses were bought secretly, without the manufacturers' approval, from wholesalers in Europe in what is known as

the "grey market", which is so named because it is neither illegal nor accepted business practice.

"This is no one-off stunt," an Asda spokesman said yesterday. "Our shoppers know that we are passionate about finding new ways to bring them low prices and great value. Over the past year, Asda has repeatedly requested designer sunglasses from official suppliers for sale at fair prices. Such requests have always fallen on deaf ears."

Shoppers at selected Asda stores across the country, will, for example, be able to buy a pair of Gucci sunglasses for £77.50, compared with the recommended retail price of £155.

In the past, the supermarket chains have sold heavily discounted ranges of Nike and Adidas sportswear, Levi jeans and Calvin Klein perfume, and England football shirts, all purchased on the grey market.

However, Tesco recently ran into trouble when the sport and leisurewear manufacturer Tommy Hilfiger issued a legal writ against the supermarket chain, alleging that Hilfiger clothes bought through the grey market and sold by Tesco were fakes.

"There is no question that these sunglasses are the real thing," Asda said yesterday. "We have got them from reputable suppliers within the EC, but for obvious reasons that is all we can say."

Nordic states demand ban on Sellafield

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

THE governments of Norway, Sweden and Denmark are demanding that the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria stops reprocessing after it was found that radio-

active seaweed collected on their coasts is a result of new discharges from the site.

An analysis by Southampton university shows that levels of Technetium-99 — a radioactive element which is a waste product of reprocessing plutonium — has increased 15-fold in Norwegian

seaweed since the early 1980s. A new plant that discharges Technetium-99 was opened in 1994 at Sellafield and the increases are linked to that.

The Environment Agency on behalf of the Government is considering a new discharge licence for the Sellafield plant.

Why a bistro went bust

Pierre Victoire

Founded by Pierre Levisy in 1988

Branches: 108

Style: Gastric bistro, providing French cuisine at budget prices

Lunch: Two courses for £4.90, three courses for £5.90, glass of white wine £2.75, filter coffee £1.00

Cafe Rouge

Founded by Roger Myers and Karen Rogers in 1989 as part of the Pelican group

Branches: 100

Style: French brasserie atmosphere, providing good-value, freshly cooked food.

Lunch: Two courses menu price £5.95, glass of white wine £2.00, filter coffee £1.00

Pizza Express

Founded by Peter Boizot in 1985

Branches: 170 in UK and five abroad

Style: Pizzeria providing good food in a pleasant atmosphere

with high-quality service

Lunch: Glass of white wine £2.50, Pizza around £5, filter coffee £1

All Bar One

Founded by Jeremy Spencer within Bass Taverns in 1994

Branches: 32

Style: Relaxed, airy urban wine bars offering modern British cuisine

Lunch: Two courses around £10, glass of white wine £2.40, filter coffee £1

The Guardian
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The Guardian Thursday June 18 1998
BMA warns of crisis if training is not stepped up

NHS set to run out of doctors by 2010

Sarah Hootley
Health Correspondent

THE NHS will run out of doctors by 2010 if drastic action is not taken to recruit and train at least 1,000 more medical students a year, the British Medical Association warned yesterday.

More doctors are needed to deal with rising demand. The numbers of elderly people are going up dramatically and there is a lot more doctors can now do to improve health and deter death.

But under greater pressure than ever, doctors are less willing to work vast amounts of overtime. Both junior and senior hospital doctors have an unacceptable workload, the BMA said.

Britain is facing the prospect of empty surgeries. There are 1,000 GP vacancies. John Chisholm, of the BMA's general medical services committee, said the problem was acute in inner cities where some GP posts had remained unfilled for two years.

It was the worst crisis in general practice for 35 years, he said. "We are talking about the medical work force,

but what we are really talking about is just the health care which patients deserve. Unless something is done we are facing disaster in general practice."

It can only get worse. The influx of doctors from the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere who came to work in Britain in the early years of the NHS is now reaching retirement age. Some 3,000 overseas-trained GPs are due to retire in the next few years.

The BMA wants the Government to implement a report of its own medical workforce advisory committee, chaired by Sir Colin Campbell. Seven months ago it recommended that an extra 1,000 students a year should be admitted to medical school. No action has yet been taken, although Health Minister Alan Milburn told a BMA conference this month that the Government was "actively considering" the report.

The BMA said that was not good enough. Time was running out, it claimed. Andrew Hobart, of its junior doctors committee, said 1,000 extra students was not a bargaining stance but a bare minimum. "If we do not increase medi-

cal schools' intake by 1,000 doctors per year, then the NHS is going to run out of doctors by 2010."

James Johnson, chairman of the BMA consultants' committee, said an extra 4,000 consultants were needed just to carry through reforms to doctors' training and reduce junior doctors' hours. One in six junior doctors were still on duty for more than 72 hours a week. But it took 15 years for the system to produce a consultant.

"Successful governments have said the UK should be sufficient in its supply of doctors but have been in too much of a hurry to ensure that we are," he said. "In fact only 38 per cent of newly registered doctors are UK doctors." Many were from developing countries. "It is improper and immoral for us to rely on not training our own doctors but taking them from countries who cannot afford to lose them."

More women than men were entering medicine — 82 per cent of medical undergraduates were women and many were likely to want a career break or flexible working at some stage. And both men and women now wanted more family-friendly careers.



People lunching yesterday in Toulouse where authorities have taken drastic measures to reduce problems with English fans

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICARDO MAZALAN

Toulousians bask in calm before the deluge

John Duncan on French city dreading influx of England fans

THE city of Toulouse, according to the local newspaper, La Dépêche du Midi, is in a state of alert — though to judge by the crowds strolling through the shopping district and chatting in the ancient squares, you would not know it.

If a hooligan invasion is on its way, the locals are being exceedingly English about it. However the citizens of Toulouse's populace, with the traditional summer music festival cancelled at the last minute.

"Changes of government couldn't do it, economic crises didn't do it, neither thunderstorms nor apathy ever did it, but a band of hooligans turn up and it is done," said Sylvie Roux.

Their presence will also be felt by the bona vivours of Toulouse with the city adopting English licensing laws

from today until the English are long gone. All bars and restaurants must close at 11pm under the orders of the local police chief. "That is hard to bear for the average Toulousian who feels punished and deprived of the World Cup's party atmosphere all because of a few idiots," said Miss Roux.

Annoyed they may be, but frightened they are not. "Not at all," said Samir Hattal, a compact disc trader at the open air market in the Place du Capitole, where police sources fear trouble could be focused. "They won't get the chance to get drunk enough. The ones who drink too much will be dealt with by the police."

No chances are being taken. The giant screens at the Palais des Sports are being dismantled. From Monday they will once again broadcast World Cup matches, and marquees housing Toulouse's exhibition of culture will be constantly under police surveillance.

Local authorities have drafted in 170 CRS officers and two battalions of the Gendarmerie Mobile. Leave has been cancelled for the 1,300 police and gendarmes available to the force.

The unmarked blue buses of the various riot squads are already in position in the Place Wilson, only a neat line of gas masks hanging in the curtained windows hinting at

the function of the officers lounging inside and on the benches nearby. Unlike in Marseille, the police in Toulouse intend to be highly visible.

Expecting 1,000 England fans from Marseille on Tuesday, they stationed a squad of armed police at the Gare Matabiau to greet them. The officers then had to suffer the chukches of the 30 England supporters who disembarked. A third of them were British workers at the local Airbus factory who had gone to Marseille for the day. If that is the worst treatment they suffer at the hands of the English for the next five days, it will be the Toulouse police who will laugh last.

Railtrack warned over safety on eve of strike

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

RAILTRACK has been warned by the railway inspectorate to ensure safety standards are not compromised by the four-day strike of 3,000 maintenance workers due to start at midnight.

Railtrack insisted last night that the strike would have a "minimal impact" on services, but it would not allow any train to run on a line which it thought was unsafe. It said: "The safety of all passengers is paramount."

It was responding to a cautionary letter from the railway inspectorate, reminding Railtrack of the need to make sure its arrangements are adequate. The letter from Derek Hill, assistant chief inspector of railways, says: "It

is essential that you are able to fully meet all requirements for inspection and emergency cover on all lines that remain open to traffic."

The strike, called by the Rail, Maritime and Transport union, over a new pay and conditions package with 10 maintenance companies, could get worse. Railtrack admitted it may have to introduce speed restrictions or cancel trains.

It rejected a claim by Jimmy Knapp, the RMT's leader, that the maintenance companies had decided not to carry out basic track inspections in the 48 hours up to the strike. Railtrack said Mr Knapp was "overstating" the position. Routine inspections were carried out over a much longer period.

Rail services between London and Edinburgh slowly returned to normal yesterday

after Great North-Eastern Railway was forced to carry out emergency checks on its entire fleet of 31 InterCity trains. Services on the east coast main line were severely disrupted after a derailment at Sandy, Bedfordshire, on Monday night for which a cracked wheel was blamed.

The latest alarm follows a move earlier this week by the German authorities to begin replacing wheels on 59 of their first generation trains after a crash two weeks ago which killed 100 people near Hanover. Investigators believe a broken wheel was to blame for the German derailment, but a GNER spokesman said: "We are certainly drawing no comparisons between the two incidents."

The Health and Safety Executive said the rolling stock was different in the two incidents.

World Cup 98

Stuart Millar

JUST as England's hooligan element can always be relied on for a bit of mayhem, the Scottish travelling support has made an art form of drink-

ing gallons of alcohol, putting on orange wigs and making everybody love their quirky ways. But the intensity of France's affection for the Tartan Army is getting embarrassing. As the Scots packed up and left Bordeaux yesterday the local media went into a mourning frenzy.

"The luckiest in the country," was how the paper described the towns which will host the killed, blue-faced hordes. There was hardly a dry eye in sight in the town. "I don't know how the Scottish can drink so much and still be

standing," said one barmaid. "We shall miss them."

CAMELOT, the National Lottery operator, is also mourning a terrible loss — potentially £45 million to be exact. People, it seems, are forgetting to buy their tickets, being so absorbed in the football action. In the first week ticket sales slumped 4 per cent — a figure which could rise to 10 per cent by the end of the tournament, says Camelot.

A MORE serious casualty of the nation's fixation with

watching football has been the blood transfusion service. In Scotland yesterday an urgent appeal was launched for donors as collection centres reported a 30 per cent fall in the flow of blood. Restrictions have already been placed on the amount of O group blood supplied to hospitals.

THE great thing about the World Cup is that it has been immune to the pressures of international politics. No boycotts, no backstabbing, no rows. Until now. Predictably it involves the United States and

Iran; less predictably, it involves a Sally Field film. Not without My Daughter, which portrays Iranian men as boorish, dirty, cruel and obsessed with their religion was shown this week on French TV and the Iranians smell a US-inspired conspiracy. The head of the Iran's soccer federation has registered a "severe protest" with the World Cup organisers over what he claims is a "blatant political exercise". Sunday's match between the two sides promises to be an even more loaded affair.

British walking rates show a marked decline

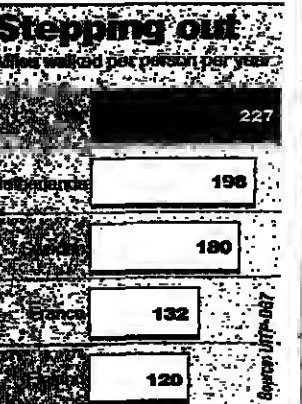
Keith Harper on a fleet-footed nation

WE DO it less than we did 10 years ago, but we do it most between 3pm and 4pm. Middle-aged men do it least of all. We do it more than our European counterparts, and quite often we do it for no particular purpose. It is free, it is clean and it is good for us.

The first report on the nation's walking habits for 20 years yesterday revealed that Britons walk an average of 20 miles a year, or about four miles a week — which is only about 3 per cent of the total distance travelled. Nevertheless we outwalk the French, the Dutch, the Spaniards, the Swedes and the Finns.

People living in towns and cities make more journeys on foot than those living in the countryside. The greatest contrast is between inner London residents, who make about 40 per cent of their journeys on foot, and those in rural areas who average only 28 per cent.

The peak hour for walking is between 3pm and 4pm, when one in 10 walking trips start. About 14 per cent of trips are for no purpose other



Street life... pedestrians out in Manchester yesterday as it was revealed Britons walk an average of four miles a week

PHOTOGRAPH BY DON MCPHEE



than the walk itself, including walking the dog.

The report, Walking in Britain, published by the Department of the Environment and Transport, says that walking is the most "natural activity and the only sustained dynamic aerobic exercise that is common to everybody except for the seriously disabled or frail."

It suggests that middle-aged people should be fit enough to walk one mile at 3 mph on the level without fatigue, sore muscles, sweating or uncomfortably fast breathing. For a man or woman of average weight, walking an extra mile a day without eating more would be sufficient to losing about three kilograms of fat a year. If maintained, "habitual, typical insidious middle-aged spread" could conceivably be averted.

Overall, the figures show that the average Briton is making 22 fewer journeys a year on foot, but an extra 200 journeys by car, a 50 per cent increase in car journeys. The amount of walking by men is

particularly worrying. Those aged 30 to 59 make about a quarter fewer walking trips than women of the same age.

Genda Jackson, transport minister, said: "This is the first report ever to bring together all the statistics on walking together. And it paints a worrying picture. People are walking significantly less than they did in the past."

Especially worrying is the collapse in the numbers of children walking to school. Only 44 per cent of 11 to 15-

year-olds walk to school, compared to 83 per cent 10 years ago.

Ms Jackson is known as the most enthusiastic walking minister in Whitehall, often refusing the ministerial car to go to the Commons.

She said: "There is a growing recognition that we cannot continue as we are now with increasing pollution from traffic damaging our health and our environment."

Ben Plowden, director of the Pedestrians' Association, welcomed the report. He

agreed that the statistics showed a slow decline and the risks of "sedentary living". But they also showed how walking "dominates short distance travel and is number two after car journeys for all travel."

Mr Plowden said: "The British are great walkers. We know we walk further than other North European countries, and walking for pleasure is increasing. It is central to dealing with Britain's congested and polluted cities."

News in brief

RAF commander backs gays

A SENIOR RAF commander has spoken out in favour of dropping the long-standing ban on gays in the armed forces. It was disclosed yesterday. Air Chief Marshal Sir David Cousins, the head of the RAF's Personnel and Training Command, said he believed that admitting gay men and lesbians "could work".

The Ministry of Defence yesterday made clear that the Government's position had not changed.

Air David, a member of the Air Force Board which advises ministers, said he would not object if the Government moved to lift the ban. "If the Government decided to open the services to homosexuals, and we did not adopt the Americans' 'don't ask, don't tell' policy, I would support it," he said in a local newspaper.

International aid saves boy

HEART surgeon Stephen Westaby yesterday revealed how a 10-year-old boy's life was saved by an international rescue operation. The boy, from Reading, Berkshire, was taken to John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford suffering from severe heart failure. Mr Westaby telephoned colleagues in Germany to ask them to bring a pumping device known as a Berlin heart — an external pumping mechanism — to England. Five surgeons flew the device over and it was implanted last Tuesday. Mr Westaby said: "We put the Berlin heart into the little boy just two hours before we felt he was going to die." By Thursday the boy was sitting up. But a biopsy showed his heart was irreparably diseased. Surgeons performed a transplant and he is now recovering at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children in London.

Most dangerous road

THE most dangerous road in Britain is to be upgraded to dual carriageway in a £25.6 million safety project. Improvements to the A66 trans-Pennine pass were announced yesterday by the Transport Minister, Geoff Strang. More than 180 serious accidents have taken place on the eight-mile summit in the past five years. — Martin Wainwright

Soothing stressed travellers

STRESSED travellers at British airports will soon be pacified by the pastoral sounds of singing birds, humming bees and gurgling streams, it was reported in New Scientist yesterday. British Airways is testing the natural sounds, merged with specially composed music, in executive lounges at Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester airports.

Reporter dies

PAUL Keel, a distinguished and versatile home news reporter and foreign correspondent for the Guardian during the 1960s, died in London yesterday after a long illness. He was 48.

Keel specialised in background articles on some of the major events of the era. These notably included the Brink's Mat robbery, the Heysel and Hillsborough stadium disasters, and terrorism. He also reported at great personal risk from Uganda, where he was caught in the middle of fierce fighting between government forces and troops of the National Resistance Army, and on the Iran-Iraq war.

During the 1970s he was considered to be one of the most promising young trumpeters and cornet-players on the British jazz scene. He entered journalism in Cardiff. He also worked for the Mail on Sunday and the Express.

Rioting case against asylum seekers falls apart

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE case against eight asylum seekers accused of taking part in a riot at the Group 4-run Campfield House detention centre, near Oxford, last summer collapsed yesterday as evidence from the private security guards proved unreliable.

Despite calling more than 20 eye witnesses, the prosecution conceded defeat after it was unable to clearly establish the identity of the rioters. Videotape evidence from 22

security cameras in the detention centre repeatedly contradicted evidence given by witnesses.

The trial had been expected to last nine weeks and its collapse after only three weeks is an embarrassment to Group 4 and the Home Office. The charges of riot and violent disorder carried sentences of up to 10 years.

The defendants, a 17-year-old, were dropped after only a week as he was too mentally ill to continue to stand trial and is now being treated in hospital. Three of the remaining eight defendants last

night walked free. Two of them have already been granted asylum. The five others were taken back to detention while their asylum cases are considered.

Sunny Ozidele, aged 30, from Nigeria, one of the accused, last night said: "It is very good news. I wrote a letter to the Home Office that the wrong people were identified, but for reasons best known to themselves, the prosecution was based on false evidence. At the end of the day, justice has served us well in this country."

The Crown Prosecution Service admitted last night

that witnesses had proved unreliable. "The evidence that came out during the course of the prosecution case was not sufficient, in our view, to merit the prosecution being continued."

During the course of the trial, the jury had heard one Group 4 guard in charge of a riot squad deny he held a detainee by the neck while he was being removed to prison, yet videotape evidence clearly showed this was the case. Another Group 4 guard admitted that he, and not detainees, had smashed a telephone inside the detention centre during the riot.

A third Group 4 officer claimed he had been concussed after one of the defendants had thrown solvent over him, yet the video showed him five minutes later, walking about in good health in a dry shirt.

Nigel Leskin, one of the defence lawyers, said: "These charges should never have been brought. Group 4 only named black defendants as being involved, yet video evidence shows all sorts took part."

Eran Harris, the local Liberal Democrat MP, questioned why Group 4's contract for Campfield House had just

been renewed. David Dickinson, of Group 4, said the company was not involved in the decision to prosecute. "All we did was provide witnesses and we certainly do not have a comment on the outcome."

The prosecution told the jury that the riot in August last year started when detainees believed two of their colleagues had been strangled and killed by Group 4 officers.

The eight acquitted were: Sunny Ozidele; Stanley Nwadike; Edward Oshonjo; Agora; Lucky Agbebaku; Sambou Marong; John Quagah; Enahor Esemuze and Harrison Tubman.



The necropolis in the basement of St Peter's basilica in the Vatican. The site, whose upkeep generates a stream of lucrative building contracts, is believed to house the apostle's tomb

Corruption scandal hits £1m Vatican project

John Hooper in Rome

A LEGATIONS of financial mismanagement at the heart of the Vatican yesterday overshadowed the launch of a £1 million project to restore the site of the supposed tomb of St Peter in time for the millennium.

In a move that went unannounced and unpublished at the time, a Vatican court last week called in a prosecutor to investigate the allegations, which have been levelled by a former senior official. For five years until 1997, Profes-

sor Giuseppe Gatto was head of administration in the department responsible for the upkeep of St Peter's basilica. Under the headline "Kickbacks in the shadow of St Peter's", the newspaper *La Repubblica* reported that Prof Gatto said he had been sacked for repeatedly questioning the allocation of funds set aside for the basilica's upkeep. It quoted him as saying: "I cannot help but stress the oddity of the fact that I was dismissed only after reporting certain irregularities."

There were signs his allegations had caused acute embarrassment. They appeared on

the morning his former boss, Cardinal Virgilio Noe, was to meet the press to launch the restoration scheme. In the event, the cardinal left the room a few minutes after the press conference began and before journalists had an opportunity to question him. The Vatican's spokesman, Dr Joaquin Navarro-Valls, said he had been called away to the telephone. Cardinal Noe did not return, although the news conference continued for another hour.

When the subject of Prof Gatto's allegations was raised, Dr Navarro-Valls said he had been instructed to say

that the cardinal was the only person authorised to comment and that he had nothing to add to what he had told *La Repubblica*. The paper quoted him as saying: "I know nothing about it. I understand there is a dispute over a dismissal, but I do not know the nature of the allegations. In any case, everything is in the hands of the Vatican's judges for whom I hold, as ever, inestimable respect."

The affair has focused attention on the fact that St Peter's is not merely one of the epicentres of Christendom, but also a structure whose upkeep generates a stream of lu-

crative building contracts. This year the Vatican is preparing to turn its best face to the world for the 2,000th anniversary of Christ's birth. The latest scheme involves the refurbishment and illumination of the necropolis under St Peter's. Although it is the reason the basilica is there, it was not until 1939 that it was professionally excavated. At its western end, archaeologists found the remains of a monument identified as one described by a 2nd century historian in a reference to St Peter's remains. The tomb beneath it is assumed to be that of the

apostle. Long before the present basilica was built — as early as the end of the 6th century — this was the site of the main altar. After restoring the area, the Vatican will have to decide how many pilgrims to admit to the necropolis. At present, less than 250 a day are allowed in by appointment. One of the architects in charge of the project, Sandro Benedetti, said damage had been inflicted by changes in the underground "micro-climate". He said: "The changes are brought about by a number of factors, but above all by the number of visitors."

Plastic surgeon's art gives Polish tourist industry a new image

Neil Bowdler in Wrocław reports on package tours which offer Westerners sightseeing, shopping and a cheap face-lift

"I always said, when I got to the age of 50, I'd have it done," says Betty, aged 53, a tough-talking custody officer's assistant from Essex. "Some want to grow old gracefully. Fair enough. I don't. I'm not ready to wear a pinny and put a shawl on."

Extreme cold, big coats and fur hats were about all that came to mind when she thought of Poland before she read about Alina Deehle's Euromedica in a magazine. The company offers cut-price cosmetic surgery far from prying eyes.

"Enjoy an all-inclusive trip to Poland and come back looking great!" promises Ms Deehle's brochure. "This was not the only offer Betty had seen from former communist countries. She had also considered the Czech Republic and Yugoslavia. But Ms Deehle's reassuring words and glossy before-and-after photographs were enough to bring her to Poland. Fear of what she might find in a country whose poverty-stricken public health services are close to breaking point did not enter her mind."

Awailing her in the south-western city of Wrocław was the knife of Dr Henryk Knaiewicz — a lifelong friend of Ms Deehle — and four hours of surgery to have her face lifted and her eyelids remodelled, all for a bargain £2,700 (plane ticket and accommodation included).

To her shock, the operation was performed under local anaesthetic and she felt every cut and stitch. Even so, "it was worth every part of that pain", she says. "I could never have afforded it in the UK. This puts it in a normal person's price bracket."

"I hope the bruising will be gone by a week on Mon-



Alina Deehle (left), director of Euromedica, with satisfied customer Betty. "I'm not ready to wear a pinny and shawl," she declared after her face-lift

day when I'm due back at work... I couldn't face people knowing," frets Mary, aged 57, from Manchester. Her large sunglasses make her look like a character in a low-budget spy film. She has told only her husband about her secret trip to Poland.

She allowed Ms Deehle to talk her into a face-lift as well as the upper eyelid surgery she sought. She also convinced her husband, David, to have the bags around his eyes removed after he insisted on accompanying her. He too is afraid of the response of the lads on the factory floor. "They'd call him a fairy they would, if they found out," Mary says.

Betty and Mary are among a group of seven English patients who make up the latest of Ms Deehle's

touring parties. Together, the group has endured five face-lifts, a mass of eyelid surgery, and one breast augmentation operation. Maria, a 20-year-old secretary from Berkshire, had been troubled for years by the size of her bust and tormented by the news that a close friend has just been cast in Baywatch. Surgery in Poland at around half the British rate was the answer, she thought. Now, waiting among the walking wounded at Dr Knaiewicz's immaculate private surgery, she can hardly walk for the pain.

For Ms Deehle, cosmetic surgery is almost a religion. She is of Polish origin but has lived for 13 years in a Welsh border village. She believes cosmetic surgery will become the norm and says upper eyelid surgery should be free on the NHS.

The youthful looking 47-year-old has also been under the knife of Dr Knaiewicz. She has brought more than 200 patients to Poland since 1995. Many, she says, are mature single women looking to rediscover lost confidence. She maintains that her package tours are not only about cutting and tucking. She also encourages her customers to spoil themselves with a mix of hair care, health checks, shopping and outings. She plans to add a week at a Polish country health farm.

Betty and Mary certainly seem pleased with their package. "Plastic surgery is exciting," glows Mary, who is already planning another trip next year for further treatment. "It does become addictive."

EU court ruling deals blow to council secrecy

Stephen Bates in Strasbourg

THE obsessive secrecy of Europe's most powerful institution, the Council of Ministers, was dealt a fresh legal blow yesterday when the European Court of Justice ruled that it had not given sufficient reasons for refusing to release information.

The case, brought by the Swedish journalists' union, is the latest to reveal the absurdity underlying the council's highly defensive interpretation of European Union regulations which supposedly uphold the public's right of access to official documents.

It follows on from the case brought by *The Guardian* and its former European Affairs Editor John Carvel in 1995, challenging council secrecy and its refusal to release ministers' decisions on policing and security issues.

Onno Brouwer, the lawyer acting for the Swedish applicants, said last night: "This

The court in Luxembourg found that the council, which represents the member states' governments and is the EU's main executive body, had failed to justify its decision. Its written judgement stated: "Most of the documents to which access was refused were concerned only with negotiations on the adoption of the European convention... and not with operational matters of Europe itself. It was not possible for the applicant to know the reasons for the adoption of the measures and therefore to defend its interests."

The judges' ruling said the council must in future exercise its discretion on whether to disclose papers by striking a genuine balance between the public interest and maintaining confidentiality in decision-taking.

But the judgment also contained a rap on the knuckles for the journalists, after a Swedish investigative reporters' association published an edited version of the council's case on the Internet during the course of earlier hearings with an invitation to the public to contact the lawyers to voice their opinions.

The court ruled this was an abuse of procedure and ordered that the council should be required to pay only two-thirds of the cost of the case as a result.

The council's case was backed by the British and French governments. French lawyers argued in court that the Swedish government had itself breached EU law by following its long-established freedom of information traditions.

Yesterday British diplomats maintained that the government is pursuing a much more open course, placing more documents on the Internet, and that the Council of Ministers is also releasing more information.

The council claimed latest figures showed that 78 per cent of requests are responded to positively, compared with 58 per cent in 1995.

Observers of the EU's workings were still sceptical last night about whether it is genuinely becoming more open. Tony Bunyan, of the newsletter *Statewatch*, said: "The court is clearly behind the right to access but the council has tightened its procedures since this case was brought."

Overture to extreme right splits Gaullists

Paul Webster in Paris

FRANCE'S Gaullist RPR party is split over a proposal to open talks with the racist National Front about the introduction of "national preference" — a euphemism for legal discrimination against the country's 4 million immigrants.

The former prime minister Edouard Balladur has called for a special commission to consider withdrawing family and medical benefits from the country's mainly North African and black African settlers who do not hold French citizenship. In doing so, he is defying the Gaullist president, Jacques Chirac, who has condemned National Front policies.

The slide towards a deal with Jean-Marie Le Pen's party highlights a series of splits on the right and has undermined Mr Chirac's authority, already shaken by extremists' success in local elections.

Mr Balladur, prime minister from 1993 to 1995, is supported by the Gaullist secretary-general, Nicolas Sarkozy, but the party chairman, Philippe Séguin, has accused him of starting a sterile debate which could only help the party's enemies. The Socialist interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, said Mr Balladur was helping the National Front by rejecting the republican principle of equality.

"Foreigners living here legally have the same rights as a French citizen," he said. "They pay their taxes and contribute to social security funds."

But MPs on both left and right see the proposal as a logical consequence of a 15-year debate within the right about alliances with an extremist movement that now has a bigger electorate than the joint orthodox rightwing vote in several parts of the country.

After municipal elections in 1995, in which the National Front took control of four big towns, it won enough seats in regional elections in March to form alliances with local rightwing leaders to govern four

regional assemblies. Nationally, the movement has about 15 per cent of the vote.

Since the regional elections, Charles Millon, a former defence minister and chairman of the South-East regional assembly based in Lyon, has formed a new popular movement called *Le Droite*. It seeks closer links with the National Front.

In another revolt to Mr Chirac, the Gaullist former interior minister, Charles Pasqua, once the president's most influential adviser, has broken with the party to campaign against European integration, another National Front cause. Two years ago Mr Pasqua said Gaullists and extremists had the same values.

Although several local leaders belonging to the centrist Union for French Democracy have aligned themselves with anti-immigrant policies, Mr Balladur's initiative is the first serious attempt by Gaullists to negotiate with the extremist movement in defiance of the president.

Mr Chirac made a television appeal to voters in March, urging them not to support a movement inspired by hatred and racism. But party battles about strategy for next year's European elections persuaded Mr Balladur to start campaigning for an anti-immigration programme.

The subject is so sensitive that the former prime minister was at first thought to have made a gaffe during an interview, when he suggested that the National Front's desire to exclude foreigners from the National Front was a special commission. Later, it emerged that he had consulted several leading MPs about opinion polls which showed that a third of the electorate was in favour of national preference, a policy the National Front has tried unsuccessfully to enforce in the towns it controls.

Mr Balladur's advisers believe that nationality and immigration are the only issues that clearly separate the opposition from the leftwing government led by the Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin. Gaullist MPs have told Mr Balladur that voters have reproached them for not supporting national preference.

French politicians accused of backing National Front racism

FRENCH politicians have been criticised by a Council of Europe commission on racism and discrimination for indirectly backing National Front racist policies, writes Paul Webster.

In one of a series of reports on attitudes in European countries, the commission yesterday said: "In a climate of public opinion where refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants are often blamed for economic and social problems, it is especially important that public figures and politicians condemn any show of racism, anti-Semitism or intolerance, and resist the temptation to combat support for extremist rightwing parties by a disproportionate focusing of policies on the issues raised by such parties."

The commission, did not name politicians, but members were understood to have expressed concern about the shift by moderate rightwing movements towards proposed discriminatory legislation.

France is said to have signed all the important recent international agreements outlawing racist and anti-Semitic attitudes, but the commission said training and guidelines for police must be improved because of ill-treatment of detainees. A non-judicial independent body was needed to investigate complaints against law enforcement officials.

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three girls
scoring below
the average
of 21.1. The
study found
that girls who
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on the test
than girls who
were not
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The proportion of
girls experimenting
with illegal soft
drugs has more
than tripled during
the past decade

Girls caught up with boys
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Netanyahu

Israeli leader no longer
much choice. But Jewish
planning a civil disobed
campaign. David Sharpe
Jerusalem reports

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American girls match boys' academic success but turn to tobacco, drink and drugs

Paying price for closing gender gap

Martin Kettle in Washington

FIRST, the good news: American girls have broken through many of the barriers created by the gender gap. Now, the bad news: researchers monitoring the closing of the gender gap have found that girls are adopting many of the most unhealthy characteristics of American boys.

More than 20 years ago, American policymakers set out to encourage girls to achieve in fields which had been male preserves: maths, science and sport. A report published yesterday says that the policymakers have succeeded, but at the price of creating a generation of girls who indulge in more alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.

The authors of The Girls Report say that girls have

The proportion of girls experimenting with illegal soft drugs has more than tripled during the past decade

almost caught up with boys in maths and have sharply narrowed the gap in science.

They also participate in a wider range of sports, including those previously reserved for boys, and take more exercise.

The percentage of girls smoking cigarettes, however, has increased much faster than boys, and the proportion of girls experimenting with illegal soft drugs has more than tripled during the past decade.

Girls are still much less violent than boys, but are coming into conflict with the law in ways that would have been almost unthinkable in previous generations.

The research confirms that girls remain much more likely than boys to suffer from depression and

to worry about their weight. "Adolescent girls are getting more of a sense of entitlement in healthy ways and feeling bolder," said Lynn Phillips, who wrote the report. "But some may be acting this out in ways that are not so healthy. There are ways we want girls to catch up with boys, but there are also ways we want boys to catch up with girls."

The study, compiled by the National Council for Research on Women, shows that there is "no significant difference" in the level of maths achievement among American boys and girls at ages 13 and 17. On the standard 0-to-600 scale used by American educationists to measure maths achievement, boys aged 13 score an average of 276, and girls 272.

In science, girls perform about as well as boys until the final year in high school, when boys' average scores are higher.

However, 21 per cent of girls aged 13 say that they have smoked cigarettes, up from 13 per cent in 1991, a much faster increase than boys. Nearly 17 per cent say that they have used marijuana, compared with 5 per cent in 1991.

The survey found that, although girls are more active, the rate of regular participation in sport among boys remains much higher, at 63 per cent, against 41 per cent for girls.

Teenage sexual activity among girls has fallen slightly in the past five years, but 50 per cent aged between 15 and 19 have had sex, nearly double the rate a generation ago.

Girls remain twice as likely as boys to be depressed, and 34 per cent of girls see themselves as overweight, compared with 22 per cent of boys. Nearly two out of three girls were trying to lose weight and girls account for 90 per cent of all young people suffering from eating disorders.

The researchers discovered significant racial differences. Black girls have more positive perceptions of their bodies than white girls and are less likely to smoke.



A smoking lounge in America where the percentage of girls using tobacco is rising much faster than for boys, despite increasing numbers taking exercise and participating in a wider range of sports

US moves to rein in international criminal court

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

THE United States yesterday imposed strict limits on the role of a planned international criminal court, which human rights groups warned could enable any tyrant to block his own prosecution.

Bill Richardson, the US ambassador to the United Nations, told delegates to a Rome conference negotiating the establishment of the court that only the UN Security Council or a state — and not the prosecutor — could have the authority to trigger prosecutions for genocide and crimes against humanity.

The court, which is likely to sit in The Hague, will not have retroactive powers and would step in only if national judiciaries were unwilling or unable to act.

But the court, intended to avoid the need for ad hoc tribunals such as those dealing with Bosnia and Rwanda, is dividing those who want a free and independent institution and those who insist on subordinating it to national governments.

The US position is sharply at odds with Britain, Canada, and most members of the European Union, which want the court to be independent from the Security Council and its prosecutor to have powers to initiate cases across a wide range of crimes. "We must not turn an international criminal court — or its prosecutor — into a human rights ombudsman open to, and responsible for, responding to, any and all complaints from any source," said Mr Richardson.

"If we move too quickly, we may create a court that will appear sound on paper but collapse under the weight of its own mandate."

The US envoy also expressed opposition to the inclusion of the crime of aggression in the court's remit — though that would have allowed the prosecution of Iraq's Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait in 1990.

Richard Dicker, associate counsel of the US-based group Human Rights Watch, said it was "shameful that Washington continues to leave open the possibility that any tyrant can block his own prosecution."

The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, has called the court a "key element of the government's ethical foreign policy".

Britain's representative, the Foreign Office legal adviser, Sir Franklin Berman, told the conference yesterday it was vital to ensure that there be neither "immunity nor impunity".

Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general, said at the start of the five-week conference on Monday that it would be better to launch a strong court without the US than a weak one with it.

France's foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, meanwhile, argued that the court should not have automatic jurisdiction over war crimes. States would therefore not be discouraged from taking part in UN peacekeeping. Paris shares Washington's concern that "servicemen might face politically motivated prosecutions."

Opposition to a strong international court also appears to be mounting in the developing world. Iran, Iraq, Algeria, India and Pakistan are suspicious of Western double standards.

Plot twist as Carrey hit prompts plagiarism suit

Martin Kettle in Washington

ONE of the world's most successful film stars was at the centre of a multi-million-dollar legal battle last night when a previously obscure New York playwright claimed that the latest Jim Carrey movie, which has been breaking box office records in the United States this week, has stolen his ideas.

Mark Dunn claims The Truman Show, which stars Carrey, is a lift from his play Frank's Story, which had a three-month off-Broadway run in 1992. He is suing Paramount Pictures for infringement of his copyright. He claims he offered the script to Paramount and that it was rejected.

Carl Person, Mr Dunn's lawyer, says the similarities "are staggering" and that his client will seek 100 per cent of



Carrey: His latest box-office hit is set to make \$450m

Paramount's proceeds from the film, which he estimates could top \$450 million.

The Truman Show, directed by the Australian Peter Weir, tells the story of Truman Burbank, who lives his life unaware that he is the central

character in a cult fly-on-the-wall television soap opera.

The suit, filed in a Manhattan federal court, describes the plots of both works as involving "a large communications corporation taking on an abandoned/orphaned child and producing a vastly successful television show (similar to a soap opera) watching the child as he grows up".

Mr Dunn's claim cites 108 instances of alleged similarities between the works, ranging from the major (a love affair between the central character and an actor who has been ordered by executives not to pursue the relationship) to the minor (the central characters are both salesmen).

Paramount said it was studio policy not to comment on litigation.

Among the other defendants in the suit are screenwriter Andrew Niccol and producer Scott Rudin.

Netanyahu 'on verge of troop pullout'

The Israeli leader no longer has much choice. But Jewish settlers are planning a civil disobedience campaign, David Sharrock in Jerusalem reports

JEWISH settlers announced a campaign of civil disobedience against the return of land to Palestinians yesterday as fears grew that the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is poised to announce further troop withdrawals.

The Jewish Settlers' Council announced its campaign as expectations began to rise that Mr Netanyahu will finally agree to a United States plan for a 13 per cent redeployment, ending 15 months of deadlock in the Middle East peace process.

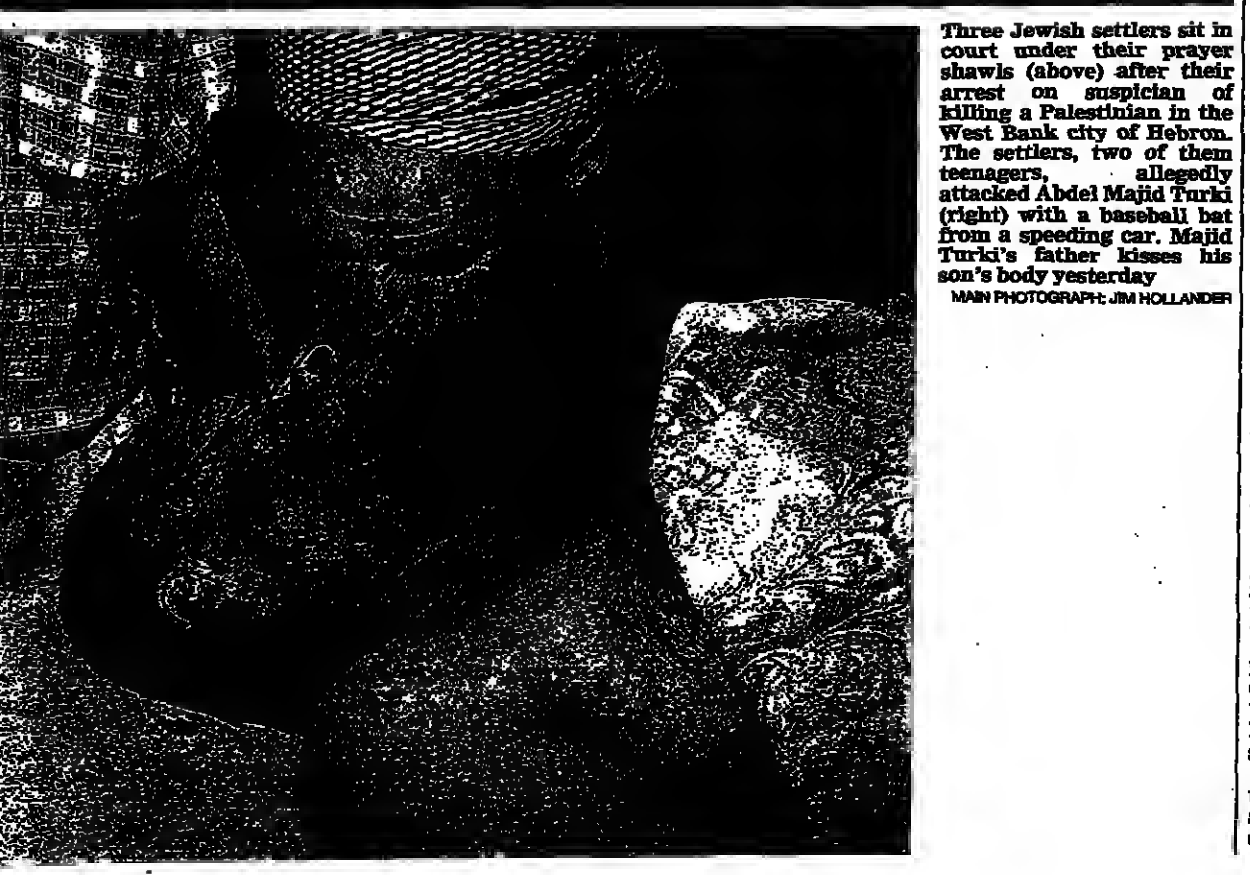
The daily Hebrew newspaper, Ma'ariv, said the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, has given the Israeli leader under Wednesday to make a decision. The Palestinians have already accepted the plan.

The newspaper said the Israeli prime minister had agreed to withdraw troops "like a child forced to swallow castor oil... only because he has been surrounded on all sides, his exits have been sealed off and he has no other choice left".

A refusal would not only make him culpable for the final collapse of the peace process, but also lead to renewed Palestinian violence and the increased danger of war with Arab neighbours, not to mention worsening relations with Israel's strongest ally, the US.

The European Union has threatened a boycott of Israeli products made in the occupied territories. Israel's economic growth has nosedived, which is seen as a consequence of the stalled peace process.

Arab leaders have been warning with increasing urgency that failure to move the process forward this summer will have disastrous consequences for the region. This week the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, launched an unprecedented attack on Mr Netanyahu, whom he accused



Three Jewish settlers sit in court under their prayer shawls (above) after their arrest on suspicion of killing a Palestinian in the West Bank city of Hebron. The settlers, two of them teenagers, allegedly attacked Abdel Majid Turki (right) with a baseball bat from a speeding car. Majid Turki's friend kisses his son's body yesterday

Heinous crime or 'youthful prank'

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

A HEINOUS crime, a youthful prank: the killing of Abdel Majid Turki, aged 52, by a Jewish settler in the West Bank city of Hebron, the West Bank city with the worst history of violence between Palestinians and Israelis.

Their lawyer, Naftali Werzberger, said the killing was "an accident and not any sort of premeditated murder", adding that one of the youths had psychological problems. They were returning from classes in another settlement when the incident occurred on a road leading to Beit Hagai, south of Hebron, he said.

"During the van ride, one took out a chunk of wood and hit a man on the side of the road," Mr Werzberger told reporters. "He [the suspect] said he never dreamed something serious would happen because of this."

Israel army radio said the suspect told police he had been "playing a prank".

At Majid Turki's home in Hebron, his 11-year-old daughter Noor was inconsolable. "My destiny is to get revenge for my father," she wept.

The funeral has been delayed pending an Israeli autopsy. Shops in Hebron stayed shut as a mark of respect.

Ebrahim Habash, director of the Beit Hagai youth village, said the juveniles were not representative of the settlement's residents who were appalled by the crime.

The Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, called the killing "a heinous crime. It's one we cannot accept. We take actions against any killings of Arab and Jew alike. We will deal with those who committed this crime, bringing them to trial and deal with them in the most forceful way that the law allows us to do."

released. The driver was now wards of state and live in a home for disturbed children in the Jewish settlement of Beit Hagai close to Hebron, the West Bank city with the worst history of violence between Palestinians and Israelis.

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Comment

Diary

Simon Bowers

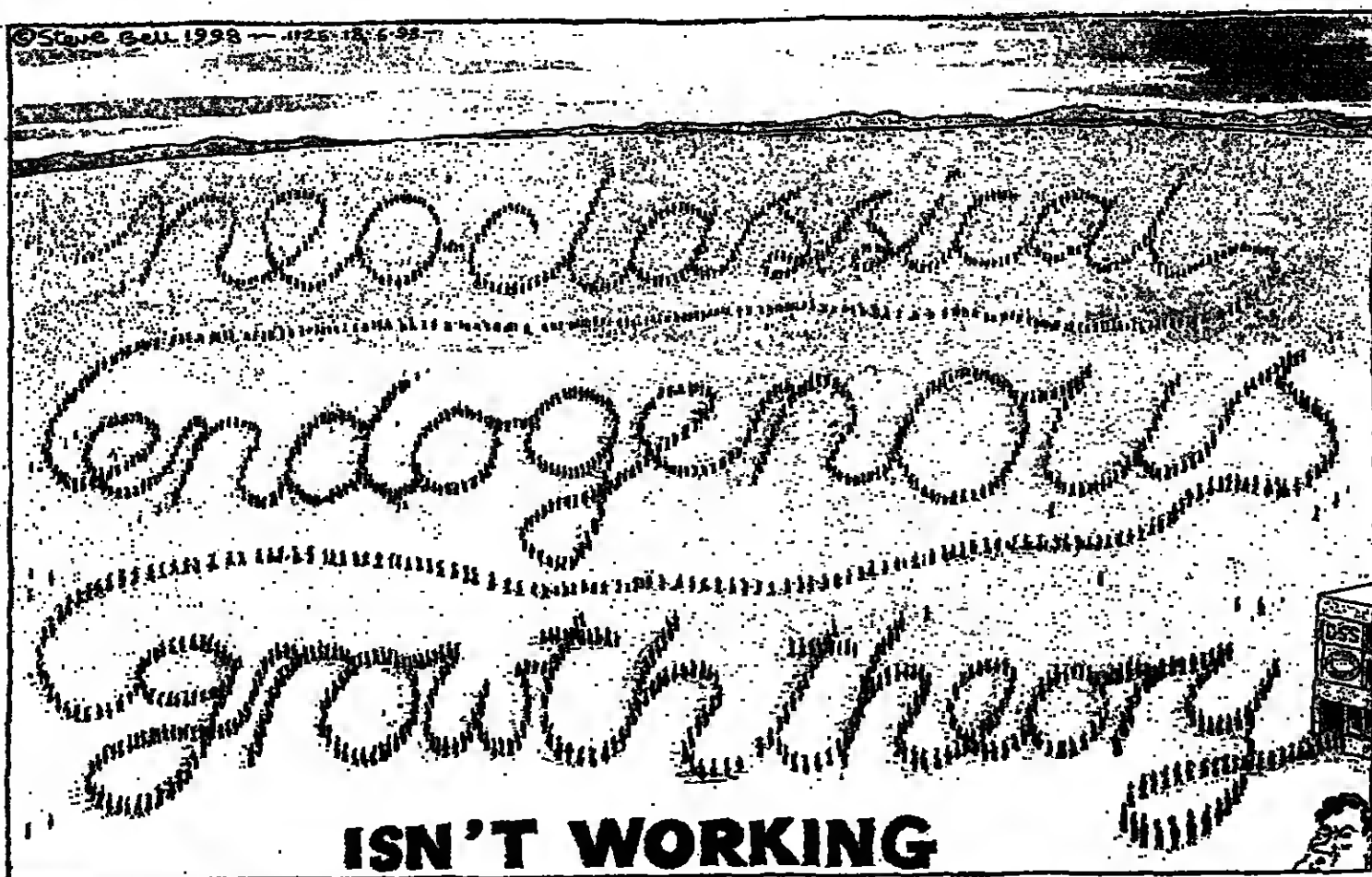
A TALE of revolving doors reaches the Diary from the small world of Westminster. Alan Meale, MP for Mansfield and parliamentary private secretary to John Prescott, has set down an early day motion on Ladbroke's possible acquisition of Coral, the bookies. "It would create an unacceptable monopoly," it states, "and thereby seriously restrict competition and customer choice." And to prove it he has commissioned an independent report by a consultancy called Economica (UK). When asked, Alan was happy to tell us that the report was funded by the people from within the betting industry, "but I'll give you their names," he adds, "they'd be up the creek without a paddle." One day the report will land on Margaret Beckett's desk and she may, or may not, recognise the writing style. Its author is Nick Pecorelli, one-time Beckett spin-doctor. "I made a point," insists Nick when we call, "of not printing it in my name. I was writing it as my company, Economica. Margaret may never know it is by me."

A HOT contender for the Diary's it's a Fit-Up '99 Award comes from Florida. It had all been a terrible mistake, Vincent Ford told a Miami jury. He had only stepped into the Mercedes to "admire the wooden dashboard." No one was more surprised than himself when the car started by accident. Unfortunately this incident, reports the Miami Herald, was not the end of the matter, as a scuffle with the owner ensued. Mr Ford managed to run off, pursued along rooftops by the police, and eventually dropped into a swimming pool. Stripping off his wet jeans, Vincent then ran half-naked into the pool-owner's house. How was he to know he had chosen the residence of the Mayor of Tampa, Dick Greco, in which to be arrested finally? The jury found him guilty of burglary, car theft and resisting arrest.

A CANDIDATE appears to have nominated herself in our competition to find the most sycophantic MP in the land. A sterling effort in Saturday's Guardian saw her arguing with Diary hero Andrew MacInlay over his contention that Labour MPs are guilty of fawning at PMs. "PMs are a fairly recent innovation and have little to do with parliamentary process," she argues. "Genuine scrutiny happens in the committee, not in a confrontational atmosphere." It is an intriguing stance, which may alarm minister David Clark — and indeed his junior, Peter Mandelson. She is Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitcham and Morden, and she says some MPs feel "green with envy at the huge amount of publicity you (Andrew MacInlay) receive". Fear not Siobhain, the Diary is happy to rectify the situation. Born on February 20, 1960, Siobhain enjoys a constituency majority of 13,741. Amongst her special interests she lists "housing, benefits and private/public sector partnership. Tomorrow — only in the Diary — she will be revealing her thoughts on absolutely any subject she chooses. Meanwhile, the search continues for further examples of obsequious MPs. The best nomination will win a Steve Bell cartoon of the fawning Member getting closer to Mr Blair than is proper.

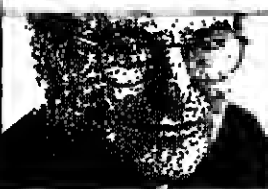
EPTAPPE reports the Peterborough Evening Telegraph, "is the subject of a talk to be given at a meeting of the Peterborough branch of the Association of Retired People", which will be nice.

ON Tuesday the Public Accounts Committee questioned cabinet private secretary Robin Mountfield on how government departments are preparing for the millennium bug. He conceded that, "some cases seem to be going uncomfortably close to the wire", but assured the committee it would be alright on the night. Committee chairman David Davis appeared satisfied, scheduling a reassessment of the crisis for February 2000. Unable to conceal a manic grin, Mr Mountfield revealed he is due to retire in 1999.



Blair may ask the people to destroy the system that put him in power

Hugo Young



THIS Government is embarrassingly popular. The embarrassment could yet be serious. Tony Blair goes on being the most popular leader since records began. The people, using the electoral arrangements available to them, voted him massively to power, and are pleased with their handiwork. But such contentment has the capacity to be a curse. It puts in jeopardy the grandest Blairite project, the construction of an all-inclusive radical centre. Before the year ends, a paradox will have him in its grip. He cannot avoid a very awkward choice.

The project reached a new peak a week ago. On the day Gordon Brown absorbed Tory privatisation into Labour's economic agenda, Mr Blair signed a concordat with Paddy Ashdown formalising his constitutional engagement with the Liberal Democrats. The progressive centre spreads its self ever further towards the edges. These voracious co-optations define what political debate will be about for the next three years. But meanwhile, such ends need their vital means. The collaborative Blair-Ashdown programme requires an answer on the climactic issue of electoral reform, and this involves putting to the people an unsettling question. Although you like what you did on May 1, 1997, will you please destroy the system that made possible the choice you exercised?

At some point, doubts about this question will overtake what have so far been the questions that count: what proportional system will Lord Jenkins's commission propose, and what attitude will Mr Blair take between PR and first-past-the-post? The first of these still matters. The commissioners may find it difficult to devise a PR system that respects the popular detestation of parties their researches have uncovered, as well as the demand of most MPs to retain single-member constituencies. But they are working with unanimous intent. Their question, for better or worse, will be answered clearly. The second question, however, becomes more complicated. Instead of asking which system Blair prefers, we need to wonder whether, triumphant as he is, he can win any referendum for change. It is the vital question for his larger project. For if he holds a referendum and loses, not only would he destroy his reputation for political infallibility, but his Lib Dem alliance would fade away. If he thought he would lose, he would prefer not to risk it. Yet if he doesn't risk it, the Lib Dems will equally have no choice but to walk Mr Ashdown's members would allow nothing else. Jack Straw said last week that the FR referendum would be held "soon". The attitude Blair takes, however, rests on a political assessment that is more hazardous than any other decision he has to make.

The arguments about systems will rain thick and fast, and Lord Jenkins, as he mediates his report, will be sensitive to them. He wants electoral reform, and is alert to what is politically feasible. When the referendum happens, the case for reform will be made with eloquence. The merits of more fairness, the virtues of coalition government, the beauties of a better-measured popular will, the horrors of unreproducible extremism: all points will be deployed. Such arguments, moreover, seem congruent with the Blairite zeitgeist of their rationality, their consensus and their likely out-

come to a politics of moderation.

But they will be met by others that are equally well-rehearsed among the fraternity which has pondered them for years. The evils of party-lists, the spectre of governments (like the German) where the smallest party perpetually holds the balance, the horrors of a weak executive, the probability of immobilism: these too will be laid before the people. And we may judge, from a recent Commons debate, that serving politicians are likely to give this second group of arguments a more conspicuous airing than the first.

Yet these academic discourses may not be the arguments that matter. What will matter is what people think about the state of politics. The onus of proof lies with the reformers, and the weight of evidence from other parts of the world is that something more than an academic case is needed to discharge it. Changing the voting system is the resort not of an electorate that thinks the present rules have imperfections, but of one that is chronically displeased with the verdict of the political class, and to particular those members of it now in charge.

HERE is Mr Blair's dilemma. The Lib Dems, for whom electoral reform is the alpha and omega of their strategy, set him the test of leading the march for change. Mr Ashdown is quite certain he will do so, and would regard as treachery any other course. It is the reformers' calculation that a referendum campaign, championed by the prime minister, would set in place the most crucial element of constitutional modernisation. Yet it's far from clear that this would do the trick. The most popular

leader the British can remember is perhaps the last man to persuade them they have a rotten system, even if, which is by no means certain, this happened to be his own opinion.

Two alternatives loom, whatever Lord Jenkins recommends. To Blairites, each will sound as unpersuasive as the other. The first has Mr Blair keenly supporting reform, despite the indifference of the people. The referendum becomes an event round which the Tory party can at last gather and unite. Mr Hague's passion for the status quo resonates better with the voters' contentment than the Blair-Ashdown attempt to persuade them that the system is unjust and produces bad results. The country says no to change, and the New Labour bubble bursts, along with the project for multi-party politics.

The other choice is to hold the referendum but play it cool. Leave it to the people. I can just about hear Mr Blair making the speech to the people's people, and thus preparing to limit the damage of a verdict that may begin to fear the verdict among other things, on the popularity he can't shake off. This too would be the end of the Lib Dem relationship, and the whole constitutional project, in which they have played a vital part, would quite possibly grind towards inaction.

There is one other option, of course. To hold a referendum and win it. To persuade the country that, for all its contentment, something else could make it happier still. This is not to be ruled out. But there are two referendums pending, and the other holds ministers in deeper thrall. Yet by comparison with electoral reform, the euro looks a sure bet.

The poor don't exist

George Monbiot



YOU might have thought that an environmentalist like me would be glad to hear that far fewer homes than previously planned will be built in the most vulnerable corner of Britain. I'm not. I'm horrified. Earlier this month, Serplan, the committee of local authorities which works out how many houses will need to be built to the south-east of England, announced that their earlier figure could be reduced by 200,000. This is the news that green-belt campaigners have been praying for.

Finally, it seems, the councils have seen sense, and stepped in to manage demand, rather than simply responding to it. So how did they succeed in reducing the figures so drastically? Have local authorities at last begun to do something about the scourge of second homes? Have they announced an exciting new measure to bring empty houses back into circulation?

Well, no. Fewer homes will be needed in the south-east, Serplan has decided, because the poor won't be able to live there. Rents and mortgages in south-east England, Serplan says, will be too high for poor single people to afford. Neither will the Government provide sufficient funds to get them housed. The planning system can therefore ignore them.

The poor, in Serplan's projections, have ceased to exist. This might sound like an esoteric concern, for whatever the figures say, the poor won't disappear, and neither will their need for housing. If a cohort of bureaucrats on an obscure committee predicts that the Government won't supply enough money, then surely they are simply documenting an unfortunate reality? But from now onwards, the Government has decreed, committees like Serplan will be responsible for the guidance which helps determine how many houses will be built and where they should go. If Serplan says that the poor will not be housed, in other words, no provision will be made for them.

IT'S not hard to see the attractions that this approach might hold for the county councils on the committee. Lower figures means less pressure on the green belt, which in turn means less trouble from campaigners, who are increasingly vocal and well-organised. The single homeless, by contrast, are among the least visible and

least influential people of all, and can therefore be safely ignored.

If this is, as it seems to be, Serplan's calculation, then it is making a grave mistake. In one blow, the councils have destroyed the moral authority of their house-building plans. New homes were needed in the countryside, councils and Government repeatedly told us, because more people would be living by themselves. Without much more provision, many would become homeless. The problem, we were told, would be particularly grave in the south-east, where housing pressure is most intense.

"If we fail," John Prescott wrote, "to provide for household growth, we risk making homes unaffordable and increasing homelessness".

If Serplan's projections are upheld, we'll get the household growth AND the homelessness. We should entertain no illusions about what this means. Serplan's reduction will make no impact on the most environmentally-destructive forms of house-building: the "exclusive developments" of four and five bedroom homes you can see advertised all over the region. But the inclusive developments which, more modest and less intrusive, house more people while hurting the environment less, will be wiped off the map.

The 500,000 people whom Shelter now records as homeless will be joined by hundreds of thousands more. In the most affluent region of Britain, the single homeless will be confronted by a grisly choice: to throw themselves on the mercy of ever more over-burdened local authorities or to sleep on the streets.

Serplan's projections consolidate a crisis in social

The homeless will be joined by hundreds of thousands more

provision, which neither local authorities nor Government seem prepared to address. The Government has allowed councils to use more of their money for housing, but most of it will be spent on long-overdue repairs. It has so far provided the £2 billion or more that the National Housing Federation says is needed for new affordable homes every year.

Blair's life membership of the Fat Cats Protection League ensures that local authorities will remain forbidden to specify the price range of the houses developers build. This is how inequality becomes intractable. Under the protective wing of a Labour Government, the rich conceal themselves from the poor to ever more exclusive estates. The poor are left to gather like dust in the forgotten recesses neglected by development.

Invited to apply, I decided against. Why do we need two bureaucracies doing one job?

Dump the Arts Council

Joan Bakewell



THE arts have never been in such a state of flux. Bad things are happening: doors closing here, cries of pain there. The Halle orchestra selling off the family strings. Good things too: young film-makers bounding off to location cash to pocket; access to galleries and museums free, but only for so long. Photographers hopeful, theatre directors desperate, the ebb and flow of thrive and

decline has never been so turbulent. And yet this may only be the beginning.

Yesterday was the start of the changes in structure, funding-patterns of access and participation which are likely to be the most momentous since the Arts Council was founded in the late 1940s. So while they're about it, redrawing the cultural map of Britain, I suggest they go the whole hog. It's time to abolish the Arts Council, subsume its strategic role into the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and leave a small and efficient ramp to handle literary applications which it already does with brilliant expertise.

I speak as someone who was asked, early in this Government's tenure, to let her name go forward in the selection of Arts Council chairman. "I'm not rich enough," I said. "I need to earn a living. You need a millionaire. Try Melvyn!" Then, invited to

apply to be on the council myself, I again declined. My reasons? A clear conflict of interests. I happily give of my time as vice-chairman of the BFI, sit on the boards of the National Theatre and Aldeburgh Productions, and the council of the Friends of the Tate Gallery. How could I possibly sit on the grant-making body and not incline to favour my friends? Even were I resolved to stay stoically silent I would surely cry out in involuntary protest at cuts to their livelihood.

Stories of Council members stepping outside the room while their particular company grant was coolly debated by their chums have always made me laugh. Fodder for a Monty Python sketch, surely. Even as fair and right decisions are made, the view outside the Arts Council and its circle is one of cronies getting together, reinforcing each other's tastes and budgets. I decided to stay

outside. There is another reason. We now have a full-blown government department, the DCMS, with some 100 staff, a budget of £387 million and administrative costs of £20 million. Why do we need two bureaucracies doing one job? I know the answer part, of course. Arts journalists have given it cre-

I was asked to let my name go forward for Arts Council chairman

dence over the years. It is the "arms length principle". The system whereby the chancellor gives the money to the secretary of state, who then gives it to the Arts Council, is meant to stop direct government interference in the arts. No politician, it's felt, could

survive a savaging in the tabloids if he were seen to fund, say, dead sheep.

The fear of some totalitarian state culture has been over-riding. Tories, it was feared, would somehow smother leftwing playwrights. Old Labour would promote brass bands. New Labour, perhaps, would hand the Barbican over to pop groups. There is no evidence of any such inclination. Perhaps local Labour councils tend to be generous to community projects for the disadvantaged. Tory councils are mean to everyone. So what? It's hardly 1984.

There are, indeed, stories of pressure being brought on artists. But they come from within the arts community itself. The Hayward Gallery, when planning the Mapplethorpe retrospective, referred photographs to Scotland Yard to avoid trouble. Lord Gowrie is known to have objected to the funding of a film about his

friend Francis Bacon. The film has since been made, but without any of the artist's paintings or being able to quote in dialogue my remarks made by him in published interviews. Lord Gowrie was chairman of the Arts Council at the time.

The Sophie's choices that face the new council — do we fund dance or photography, promote fashion at the cost of poetry? — are ones that are the direct consequence of government financial stringency. Let them admit such and take the heat. The Department of Health doesn't leave the funding of the NHS to a quango of doctors; the Ministry of Education doesn't hand over educational spending to a cabal of teachers. This Government is one of clear agendas, answerable to its electorate, claiming to give an annual account of its progress. Let the DCMS do the same. It may be fearful — when it makes daring or traditional choices — of the phi-

listinism of the tabloids. But the Royal Academy mounted the Sensation exhibition and survived. More importantly, the Government and the DCMS should lead the fight against that most insidious class snobbery, promoted by populist rhetoric. The snobbery that tells ordinary people that "opera is for toffs", that people like them can't enjoy classical music or dance, opera or theatre, so must scoff and despise it. Only if the Government and its embattled culture secretary Chris Smith give such leadership can they justify the quotation in Labour's arts policy document:

A person who every day looks upon a beautiful picture, reads a page from some good book and hears a beautiful piece of music will soon become transformed person — one born again.

John Ruskin wrote it. Let Labour make it possible.

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The rise and rise of pay

Does the cure worsen it?

WELL, NOW we know more about the forces behind the Bank of England's decision to raise interest rates this month. On Tuesday it was disclosed that annual inflation rose from 4.0 per cent to 4.2 per cent in May — or from 3.0 to 3.2 per cent on the Government's preferred measure, which excludes mortgage interest. Yesterday it transpired that average earnings rose from 4.9 to 5.2 per cent in March — suggesting that the good times are still rolling — while the number of people getting unemployment benefit actually increased in May for the first time for ages — suggesting the good times may be on their way out. Yet the Government's own figures are in rude health (though the taxes raised to make them so have increased the Retail Prices Index and the pressure for more wages).

So what is really going on? The Thatcherite reforms of the 1980s — which smashed national pay bargaining, crippled the powers of the unions and made it easier for employers to fire people — was supposed to enable the economy to expand faster without running into institutionalised wage inflation. Was it all in vain? Will we have to experience another recession before inflation can be brought down to levels consistent with entering monetary union? The answer is that we won't know for a few months yet because there are confusing things going on in the labour market. For a start there are two labour markets. In the public sector — where a fierce incomes policy has been in operation for ages —

earnings have risen by 2.5 per cent, while in the private sector they have shot up by 5.6 per cent. Just how long such blatant discrimination can go on without the public sector reacting remains to be seen.

In the private sector, basic pay settlements have been fairly stable, but earnings have been pushed up by a number of forces. Employers are increasingly paying employees in ways related to performance or profits and have stepped this up recently to beat the Government's clampdown on this form of tax evasion. At the top end of the scale, earnings in "financial intermediation" rose by 47.5 per cent between October last year and March. Although this is real money which will be spent or saved it may simmer down as the economy itself continues to slow down. At the bottom end earnings have been boosted by firms anticipating the introduction of the minimum wage. There is also widespread evidence that bargainers are still basing their claims either directly or indirectly on the official RPI which includes mortgages. This has the paradoxical result that, at least in the short-term, higher interest rates actually increase inflation rather than reduce it as intended.

If most of the increase in earnings were a temporary spin-off from higher growth there wouldn't be much to worry about. One of the objects of economic policy is to raise wealth (even if the distribution leaves a lot to be desired). It is the effect on prices that matters. But even here the picture is confusing. The biggest increase between April and May was in seasonal foods because of the bad weather — but over the year food prices as a whole have risen by only 1.8 per cent, while clothing and footwear prices have hardly risen at all and fuel and light has gone down by over 5 per cent. All of the big increases in the constitu-

ents of the RPI are related to budget tax changes which have increased the cost of tobacco, motoring and housing. Strip these out and the RPI would be rising at 2.5 per cent, smack on the official target.

What does all this add up to? There is clearly a problem with private sector pay, the responsibility for which lies squarely with employers. The problem may subside shortly as the effects of past interest rate increases, the crisis in Asia and the sharp slowdown in economic growth take their toll on wage pressures — as long as the medicine of higher interest rates doesn't make the patient worse.

Nuclear virtue

But why deploy at all?

BRITAIN WILL make the most of its intention to cut the number of nuclear warheads on the Trident submarines by up to half. The decision, which will be announced (as we report today) when the Government publishes its Strategic Defence Review, certainly looks good on paper. The anti-nuclear lobby in the Labour Party will be urged to regard it as a positive step towards nuclear reduction. And in the wider world, it will be presented to India and Pakistan, as well as to the non-nuclear international community, as a sign of good intent. At least one member of the Nuclear Five, Britain will argue, is acting in the spirit of the commitment (made in the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty renewal) to pursue the goal of nuclear disarmament.

One aspect of the decision apparently now reached does deserve non-nuclear praise: the offer of full transparency — that is, to provide on-the-record information about warhead numbers and fissile materi-

als. Britain is setting a good example here to the other nuclear weapon states: it could be a first step towards establishing an international nuclear arms register (which Robin Cook has supported in the past). Unfortunately, numbers are not the essence of the problem. The crucial issue lies with operational deployment, where the nuclear "conservatives" seem to have won the argument in favour of maintaining Trident on alert, at sea and (in theory at any rate) for 24 hours a day. In this new age, just whose surprise attack is this needed to deter? It hardly lives up to Mr Cook's recent promise of "ambitious and practical" plans for arms control.

India and Pakistan have been saying to anyone who will listen that they feel safer after their nuclear tests. Deterrence works, OK. The Nuclear Five reject the argument — far as south Asia is concerned — urging both countries not to weaponise or deploy. Yet the British decision does not just take for granted the doctrine of deterrence: it carries it further, with the implication that deployment on full alert is essential too. This is the musty conventional wisdom of the cold war decades — doubly disappointing from a Labour government. The Foreign and Defence Secretaries should go back and argue it out with their strategists: they are missing a chance to show that Britain really can lead in a new direction.

Pupils' rights

Marked papers aren't private

HILARY MORIARTY had better keep her head down for the next few weeks. Her spirited call in this week's Guardian Education for the right of school pupils to see

their marked examination papers will make her extremely unpopular with many of her teaching colleagues just as they begin marking hundreds of thousands of GCSE and A-level papers. Her readiness to open her work to the scrutiny of pupils is the equivalent of a neurosurgeon supporting open league tables on death rates or judges agreeing to the Consumer Association monitoring their performance on the bench. Three cheers for Hilary Moriarty.

We still live in an era in which school pupils are regarded as "raw material" in a production process rather than individuals with human rights. Not only are pupils not allowed to see their papers once having submitted them, but even when they appeal against the grade which they have been awarded, they are only given an account of the original examiner's approach rather than the paper itself. Marking can be an exhausting business: 300 papers or so in three weeks. In Hilary Moriarty's words "a purple patch of intensive and highly demanding effort compressed into an alarmingly short space of time". Mistakes are inevitable. What remains in doubt, unless pupils and their teachers have the marked papers in their hands, is whether they are all corrected by the appeal process.

The examination boards are bound to resist the call. They will call it impracticable and claim it would clog up the appeal process. All bureaucracies dislike admitting errors. Yet just across the sea, Ireland is about to introduce just such a system. Further away, New Zealand has been returning exam scripts to candidates for a decade. It has led to a reduction in the number of appeals. Pupils, like everybody else, can suffer from false memory syndrome: what they remember as a superb A-grade reply can, when revisited, turn out to be real turkey.

Letters to the Editor

Death, sex and Victor Hugo

FRANCIS Wheen's article (Words of wisdom from the Asiatollah, June 10) was an affront to the dignity, sensibilities and cherished beliefs of a whole nation, is the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and those of Muslims worldwide. The juxtaposition of Islamic injunctions alongside irrelevant questions, and at times, irreverent contexts, is inappropriate and deplorable. Alsalah Mohammedi, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, London.

JONATHAN Freedland misses the point (Comment, June 17). The House of Lords is in dire need of someone like Victor Hugo. It is far more productive to have such a personality working for reform from the inside, rather than protesting in vain from the outside. That is the way institutions are changed. Keith Vaz MP, House of Commons.

YOU seem to give a disproportionate amount of coverage to some creative people when they are dead. The most recent, and by no means unique, example of this is your recent obituary on sociophoneticist Tommy McCoole. As a musician myself I missed that he probably never received anything like this kind of coverage during his life. How about celebrating people when they're alive a bit more often? Eddie Prevost, Barrow, Essex.

NOTE with surprise (High Society, June 16) that the Mile High Club is still functioning. The in-thing nowadays is the Fathom Deep Club. A Eurostar gives 20 minutes under the English Channel. Le Shuttle gives slightly longer. The Japanese undersea tunnels are comparable. The new Danish one is, however, somewhat shorter and somewhat of a challenge. John Batts, Banbury, Oxon.

A PLAQUE on the wall of an old house in a small village outside Paris reads: "Le 16 Février 1802, Victor Hugo y est né dans une maison." Sets off a whole train of new ideas. Hilary Byrne, East Molesey, Surrey.

Are the hacks to blame

I AGREE with Polly Toynbee's excellent article on cynical xenophobic opinion. One of the problems of the press, but the problem lies more deeply bedded in our culture and our teaching of history (The press, June 17). I was a wartime child brought up on the romance of empire and our glorious, victorious past.

As a Young Conservative, I thought it was good sport to try to break up Labour Party meetings (they were telling us unpleasant things about poverty, injustice and deprivation in our country) and blood on the floor was a spur rather than a deterrent. It was many years before I saw the whole picture. Sadly many of my contemporaries have not moved on and myths are perpetuated. Liz Morland, Stanford in the Vale, Oxon.

IN common with most journalists, Polly Toynbee overstates the influence of newspapers. The press reflects nationalism and racism, perhaps gives them a nudge, but it does not create them. It's all a lot more deep-rooted than that. For example, it was not the press that decreed that the Ry-

past at the Trooping of the Colour be by world war two planes, nor the press that brought troops to the throats of those who watched it on TV or saw the press photographs the next day. But one thing is for sure — if England reach a match against Germany in the World Cup, those planes and the attitudes that put them there, will have done more than the press to encourage the lads to, um, behave badly. Julian Rathbone, Thorney Hill, Dorset.

POLLY Toynbee is spot on when she says (Writing England) fans are "the true children of the great British newspaper industry". But how does that explain the behaviour of those warm and cuddly Scottish fans? Don't they read right-wing papers in Auchtermuchty? Michael Taylor, London.

CONGRATULATIONS on Polly Toynbee's tremendous article. It's a great feeling to be able to name the evil. The question now is, how do we begin to battle it, to respond, to take some action? Our politi-

cians seem impotent. How do we goose them into movement? Are we completely powerless, despite our alleged freedom of the press — or is it because we have press freedom that we are powerless? Adam Thompson, Brussels.

A LOT has been recently written about Sir David English and how, circumspectly, he made the Mail a success. Someone should now critically review his career and expose him as the main architect for the perpetration of xenophobia and degenerate patriotism in Britain. I have no doubt that the current football hooliganism, Europhobia and the rise of the SNP in Scotland can be attributed largely to the bigoted and narrow-minded outpourings of David English and his protégés. Shahid A Jumeid, Alcester, Warwickshire.

BRITISH press attitudes lead to British xenophobia leads to English thugs? Surely some mistake! Colin Wolverson, Stanfoot, Perthshire.



Ulster: gunning for a final solution

HUGO Young is naive in arguing (Comment, June 15) that decommissioning should be linked with the release of licence of paramilitary prisoners. The release of the prisoners is in acknowledgement of the paramilitary organisation maintaining a ceasefire. This is a fairly small and safe concession as the licences they are being released under contain stronger safeguards than previously used. The demand for decommissioning on top of this could be viewed by some as surrender.

Decommissioning is far more likely to proceed under a general demilitarisation of the region, linked to reform and disarmament of the RUC and scaling down the presence of British troops. Sean Cassidy, Dublin.

IN each generation since partition, nationalists have been subjected to pogroms in which Catholic communities have been burned out of their areas by Loyalist mobs. In 1958, en-

tire nationalist streets were razed and over 7,000 families were forced to flee.

Who other than the IRA will act as a last line of defence for vulnerable nationalists? I doubt they will place their faith in the British Army or even a reformed RUC, while the Good Friday agreement makes no mention of the over 100,000 legally held weapons, which are overwhelmingly in the hands of the unionist community. Brendan O Muirthille, London.

HUGO Young ignores the IRA's history and reasoning. It never has decommissioned. The most that can be expected, in line with past practice, is the border campaign of the fifties and sixties, is a declaration of the war is over. But that seems unrealistic until republican leaders are convinced hardline unionists will be unable to wreck the peace agreement. Ivan Rowan, Stroud, Glos.

Tax and spend

INFLATION has risen (largely because Gordon Brown increased indirect taxation (Inflation fuels rate rise alert, June 17). If he wasn't a man of his word he might increase income tax and decrease indirect taxation, which would reduce inflation at a stroke. Anthony Gunnersen, London.

SO interest rates have had to go up because we are paying ourselves too much? As a middle-aged, middle-grade local government officer, I would like to know who is getting my share. Those of us who work in local government have not had a pay increase anywhere near inflation since Thatcher came to power. Yet, our mortgages go up just the same as those of the rest of us who have had huge rises year after year. The directors of Goldman Sachs seem likely to receive, in return for selling off a tiny bit of their company, more money each than my entire department could earn in a lifetime.

If the Government thinks the public sector is going to wait for ever to start catching up with the private sector, it could have a surprise coming. S Beley, St Ives, Cambs.

Psyched up

THE end of the Louise Woodward trial (Woodward freed at a price, June 17) will likely only be the mid-point of this story. Analysis will be required of not just Ms Woodward and her family, but of the entire British psyche. The public's unstinting support for this pathetic girl seemed to be a follow-on to its irrational response to the death of Princess Diana. Why is it that people with little or no knowledge of someone can provide unqualified support? Do they think they know what goes on in Louise Woodward's head? They do not know any more than the neighbour of the jailed British football hooligan who said: "He's a good bloke who can throw rocks and bottles."

What also needs to be thrashed out is the British view that all other justice systems are inferior. Last week we had the story of a man released after 23 years in prison for a crime that no one committed. Add the women harshly treated for defending themselves against brutal husbands and various ethnic minorities disliked for the colour of their skin and thus found guilty and one finds little to be proud of. Steve Sasanow, Lechlade, Glos.

Heathrow Express slots in with business travellers

YOUR correspondent (Letters, June 15) is wrong to suggest the Heathrow Express offers no incentives for businessmen to forgo their cars. BAA has invested £450 million for this purpose.

Research has shown that £10 is the right level to persuade drivers to leave their cars at home, without attracting existing public transport passengers. As well as being significantly cheaper than driving to the airport, business passengers say that the fare is good value for the quantum leap in customer service. With a 15-minute journey every 15 minutes, purpose-built trains, check-in at Paddington and a team of 150 highly trained customer service representatives, it shows how good rail can be.

It also shows the contribution the private sector can make to an integrated public transport system. By removing 3,000 cars from the roads to Heathrow every day, it is a step towards BAA's vision of 60 per

cent of Heathrow's passengers travelling on public transport. Rod Hoare, Chairman, Heathrow Express, London.

AT most airports in the world (Flying the slots at Heathrow, June 12), slots are allocated by the airline based at that airport, such as Sabena in Brussels. The UK was the first country to move to allocation by an independent company, when Airport Co-ordination Ltd was set up in 1992.

The board of ACL, of which I am chairman, consists of representatives from 10 UK airlines. The board governs ACL's administration and investment, but has no influence on the allocation of slots. BAA's 38 per cent share of Heathrow slots includes its subsidiary, Air Liberté. Your figures for the other European airports exclude subsidiaries of the base carriers. Richard Wyatt, Senior manager, schedules planning, British Airways.

Period of reflection on how to get rid of sanitary waste

THANK you for bringing the problem of how we dispose of tampons to the fore (It's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it, June 16). In our latest research on clinical waste, we found that 15 per cent of local councils in areas such as car parks, lay-bys and public toilets — along with condoms, disposable nappies and used cotton buds.

There is clearly confusion about what people should be doing with their clinical waste. Tidy Britain Group works closely with a number of organisations on the "Bag it and Bin it" campaign, which encourages the public to think twice about what they flush down the toilet. Tampon mak-

ers could help here, by putting a bigger, clearer, "don't flush" message on their packaging. Prof Graham Aspinall, Tidy Britain Group, Wigan.

ONE someone explain to me why it is more polluting to put sanitary towels and tampons down the toilet than it is to use the sewage system for urine and faeces? We women are expected to feel collective guilt that used sanitary products are strewn over the beaches, but these things are not more disgusting or bacteria-ridden than the other sewage found there. They are just more easily identifiable. The problem is that the sewage treatment system is inade-

quate. If properly treated and pumped far out to sea, it wouldn't tend to pollute the beach. If sanitary towels block the filters and treatment systems, it is because these items are not being designed for flushing. Disposal of sanitary products in domestic dustbins is not a solution. It can be messy and embarrassing. It adds to the problem of landfill sites and presents a hygiene problem in itself.

I don't think we should be made to feel guilty about society's waste disposal problems or that women should accept the assumption that their menstrual waste is uniquely offensive and unhealthy. S Smith, Colchester.

THERE is an alternative to dumping or landfilling sanitary protection products. Energy from waste (EFW) would destroy the products through combustion in purpose-built power stations and generate electricity. New EFW plants are now operating in south-east London, Birmingham and Teesside. Older plants have been rebuilt in Coventry, north London, Stoke, Nottingham and Sheffield.

The female population in these areas can rest assured that their sanitary protection products are not being dumped at sea or sent to landfill. Lucy Howlett, Energy from Waste Association, London.

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Steven Groak

Building on new designs

STEVEN Groak, who has died of a heart attack aged 54, was an architect, engineer, planner and economist, who used concepts from all these disciplines in his building design.

His professional practice began in the late 1960s with periods both as an engineer at Ove Arup & Partners and as an architect with the sister practice Arup Associates. His parents emigrated from what is now the Czech Republic, just before the war. He was born in north London, and educated at St Paul's School and Merton College Oxford, where he took a degree in civil engineering and economics, and University College London, where he got a first in science in architecture. He subsequently joined Constra Ltd in the Greater London Council before 12 years at UCL's Bartlett School of Architecture, Build-

ing, Environmental Design and Planning, where he ultimately became director of building studies. He loved teaching, his courses included building economics and production, and at this time he developed his ideas of technology transfer and new ways of educating building professionals. He was also joint editor of *Habitat International*, dedicated to planning and building, especially in developing countries.

In 1990, Steven rejoined Arup as head of research and development. His group, he observed, "able to solve the problems that only they could have created in the first place". His *The Idea of Building*, commissioned by the Building Centre Trust, explores the ways we think about building, and provides a perspective on the knowledge needed to design, make, and enjoy them. He uses the concept of



He felt tools like computer-aided design or project management systems tend to restrict the investigation of alternative approaches

"robust technologies" to describe the tried and tested building methods, but the range of robust technologies—even humble brick walls—are diminishing as we push traditional methods beyond their normal limits. So as buildings become more complex, ways of developing and

feeding back design and construction knowledge must be modernised. One of Steven's central concerns was how we develop this knowledge, and he contended that existing tools like computer-aided design or project management systems tend to be restrictive for investigating alternative

approaches, and do not allow us to represent the range of activities and factors in construction, or the ways in which buildings will be used. Yet multimedia technologies are becoming available to support new ways of designing and constructing buildings. Last February he provided a glimpse of the future in a demonstration of these approaches in the first Ted Happold Memorial Lecture at the Royal Society of Arts.

Steven was as practical as he was visionary. In his years at Arup he contributed greatly to "real" construction. His work ranged from new forms of industrialised construction to strengthening building research in the Vietnamese construction ministry. In 1994 he led a British Department of Trade and Industry expert mission to Japan to report on industrialised housing systems, and was part of a 1996 mission to

the United States to report on decision-support systems and artificial intelligence programmes for construction. Kind and caring, honest and independent, yet gentle in his criticism, Steven made one think the unexpected. His passion for excellence extended into food, visual arts, literature and music. An evening with him could provide an increased appreciation of Buckminster Fuller—or Glenn Gould.

Many of his ideas developed when technology did not exist to put them into practice, and his early death came just as computer science was beginning to provide the means to implement them. Yet all who knew him benefited from his extraordinary mind. He is survived by his partner.

David Gann
Steven Groak, architect, born April 22, 1944; died June 3, 1998

Malcolm Lilly

Secrets of the enzyme

MALCOLM Lilly, who has died of cancer aged 61, was Britain's first professor of biochemical engineering. His legacy is a flourishing department and a research centre for advanced biochemical engineering at University College London.

Born in south London and educated at St Olave's School, Malcolm arrived at UCL to read biochemistry in 1956 after Royal Navy national service. Biochemistry was then a relatively new undergraduate subject, and it led him to research on microbial enzymes. After his PhD he joined a research programme to produce biological compounds which were not commercially available. He recognised that recent discoveries in biology offered tremendous opportunities for new industrial processes.

In 1963 he was appointed lecturer in biochemical engineering. A few years later he was joined by Peter Dinnell, who became his closest collaborator. One of the central strands of their research was the development of methods for using the high specificity of enzymes for complex reactions that were difficult to carry out by standard chemical methods. Because biological molecules, such as enzymes, are not as stable as industrial chemical catalysts, research was needed to find out the best methods for maintaining their structure, and catalytic properties during purification and large-scale operations. It was also essential to develop appropriate equipment.

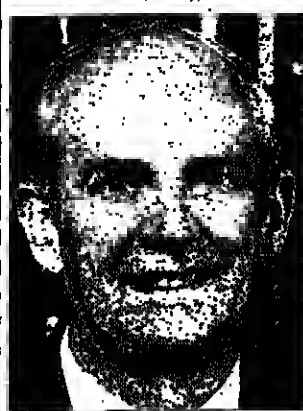
Previously, biochemists and microbiologists had tended to scale up their preparations by using larger vessels of a similar type to those used in their laboratories—and in the 1940s penicillin was produced from cultures grown in milk bottles. But Malcolm and Peter investigated equipment already used in industry. For example, they found that milk homogenisers used by the dairy industry could be used for disrupting micro-organisms. Later they improved the design of the fermenters in which the micro-organisms were grown.

Malcolm's early work on the properties of enzymes immobilised by attachment to resin beads had particular importance. Immobilised enzymes have increased stability and can be used in commercial bioreactors for longer periods. One of the early successes at UCL was using an immobilised bacterial enzyme for the production of semi-synthetic penicillins. He researched biotransformation throughout his career, but also worked on other topics including mammalian cell culture, nucleotide isolation and biological fuel cells.

He was an excellent teacher, within a lively and happy department, and attracted students from all over the world. His achievements were recognised internationally, and he was elected to the Royal Society and the Royal Academy of Engineering. He was a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania and a visiting fellow at Merck & Co.

At the height of his powers Malcolm was struck by cancer, which he fought courageously for more than 30 years. With medical help and, more importantly, the constant support of his wife, Sheila, he continued his research until the last days of his life. He was a governor of his old school, a volunteer countryside ranger, and was particularly proud of his Institute of Advanced Motorists qualifications. He is survived by his wife and two sons.

Patricia H. Clarke
Geoff Potter writes: I first met Malcolm Lilly in the late 1960s and over the next two decades, as director for biotechnology in the Science and Engineering Research Council, I witnessed and provided support for the development of the first centre for biochemical engineering at UCL, which played an important part in ensuring that Britain



Lilly... key research

was one of the world leaders in biotechnology research. Malcolm, together with Peter Dinnell, also fought the long battle to gain acceptance of biochemical engineering as an academic discipline in its own right. In the struggle for funding, biologists would often see biotechnology as only involving recombinant DNA technology plus biochemistry and microbiology. There was no engineering component.

Conversely, engineers would regard biochemical engineering as a small subset of process or chemical engineering. They would disregard any link between it and the biological sciences. Malcolm's work showed that these attitudes were narrow and blinkered. He also demonstrated that biochemical engineering could produce research outcomes of considerable value both to the academic world and to industry. Success in the 1980s struggle for funding required persistence, energy and a first-class research track record—all of which Malcolm had. Calm and friendly, his open manner helped ease tense research funding meetings towards positive outcomes. He will be greatly missed by the international biotechnology community who held him in the highest regard.

Malcolm Lilly, Biochemical Engineering, born August 8, 1936; died May 18, 1998

Letter

Chris Scarlett writes: I first met future prime minister John Major (obituary, June 16) in 1970, and we argued passionately about the possibility of effecting positive change within the most corrupt area of the state. I did believe that someone with John's humanity and radicalism could bring about his vision of a just and compassionate approach, and argued that it would crucify him. What happened over Parkhurst clearly broke his heart. In the last few days I have reflected on whether it would have been better if John had not gone back into the job after his break from it in the 1970s. But it became more and more apparent to me that John did the job in a way no-one else did and touched many people's lives in a way that no-one else could. He was a

compassionate humanitarian of the best kind, courageous, truthful and imbued with integrity. He was also the man who was sacrificed to save a Home Secretary's neck, and whatever else may be written about Michael Howard I'm confident that none of those words will appear in his obituary.

Death Notices

RAYMOND, on 16th June, William Raymond, of the Community of the Resurrection, in the 87th year of his age, at the house of the Resurrection, 12th June, 1998. For information about the funeral, call 0774 745 858.

ELIJAH, on Thursday 11th June 1998, peacefully at the Royal Marsden Hospital, after a long illness, beloved wife of Robert Eljah, mother of Frances (deceased) and Robert, grandmother of Rebecca, Katherine and Jeffrey. Funeral service to be held at St. Barnabas, Colwyn Bay, Colwyn, 12th June, 11.30am. Burial in Colwyn Bay. Tel: 01492 862222.

CHRISTIAN, John James, passed away 11th June 1998, aged 89 years. Beloved husband of Pat, father of Alan and Fern. The funeral will take place on Monday 22nd June at 10.30am at St. John's Church, Bishopscote Road, Merthyr Tydfil. Family flowers only. Donations to St. John's Church, 344 Wylfa Lane, Colwyn Bay 545 1AF.

In Memoriam

DOUGLAS, Sir, died 18 June 1997. Beloved cousin and lover of John and Joan. Tel: 01753 4267 or 0171 737 4767 between 10am and 5pm Mervin.

Thomas Narcejac

Plot to kill off the detective

SUDDENLY he says to himself: "Manou has been deceiving me." An hour ago he had not thought of this. But now he is possessed by the idea, and as he thinks back and remembers, he discovers that he is sitting in a truck, travelling in a strange country. As we learn about his obsessive love for Manou, we are told that the country is Afghanistan, that the man is a publisher in Paris and that Manou when she brought him the manuscript of her book. The narrator is working for him so that he can be near to Manou, who is flying to Afghanistan. Together they go to the airport. A woman arrives. She is greeted by her husband. But she is not Manou. Where is Manou? And who is she?

This is the beginning of the novel *Les Victimes* by Boileau-Narcejac. It is a typical beginning. There is mystery, suspense, suspicion. On the shelves of French bookshops, alongside the rows of Agatha Christie and Simenon, there are also collections of Boileau-Narcejacs. And this name meant that there were two authors. It was simplicity itself. They were Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac. Boileau died in January 1969. Narcejac has died in Nice, at the age of 69.

Their partnership was remarkably successful. They told their own story in *Tandem* (1986), describing what was then 35 years of collaboration in the writing of suspense and mystery stories. Narcejac, whose real name was Pierre Ayraud, was born in Rochefort-sur-mer, in the department of Charente-Maritime. He was educated at Poitiers and the Sorbonne, taking a degree in philosophy and literature.

As a teacher he reached a highly respectable position in the Lycée Clemenceau at Nantes where he amused his

pupils, and himself, with pastiches of well-known authors. From there to inventing further adventures for Sherlock Holmes and Arsène Lupin was but a step. By 1948 he was specialising in novels of action and adventure and that year won the Prix du roman d'aventures and met Pierre Boileau—who had earlier won the same prize. Their collaboration began in 1951.

They both disliked the novel of Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett and Narcejac shocked Marcel Duhamel, the man who founded the famous paperback *Série Noire*, by telling him that a "detective story did not need to have a detective. The solution to the mystery and of the crime that was involved, would best come from the witnesses and participants themselves.

Boileau devised the plot while Narcejac wrote the story, which meant that after the death of Boileau, Narcejac went on to write three more novels by himself. Together, they produced some 43 novels, more than 100 short stories, four plays for the theatre and several works for children. They were translated into English and many other languages.

In 1952 Boileau-Narcejac published *Celle qui n'était plus*, it had been refused by many editors, who complained about the absence of police and detectives. But once published by Denoël, its mystery and the suspense appealed to film-makers. Both Alfred Hitchcock and Henri-Georges Clouzot wanted it, resulting in the latter's *Les Diaboliques*. Hitchcock's turn came later with the novel which became his film *Vertigo*. Other novels were also chosen for the screen.

He was married twice and is survived by his two daughters.

Douglas Johnson
Thomas Narcejac, writer, born July 3, 1906; died June 7, 1998



Paul Meurisse and Simone Signoret in Les Diaboliques



Country's first family... Helen Carter (with accordion) and her sisters and mother

Helen Carter

Family values at the Opry

THE death of Helen Carter at 70 begins the erosion of the second generation of country music's "first family". Her mother, Maybelle Addington Carter, sang and played guitar in the original Carter Family, the best-known and best-loved singing group in the rural south of the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Supported by her husband Ezra, Maybelle raised her three daughters, Helen, June and Anita, to follow her into the business.

In 1939-39 the senior Carters were living in Texas and broadcasting on the powerful stations, just over the border in Mexico, which defied US frequency allocations, much like the offshore pirate stations in Britain in the 1950s. Maybelle initially took only her youngest daughter, Anita, back at the family home in Virginia, heard their six-year-old sister on the air they were so jealous that they demanded to be allowed to join the group. Surviving recordings show the pre-teen trio getting by largely on ingenuous charm, but they worked hard to improve, and when the Carter Family

broke up in 1943 Maybelle and her daughters, now known as Mother Maybelle and the Carter Sisters, promptly found a billet on the *Old Dominion Barn Dance*, a popular Richmond, Virginia radio show. After five years there and shorter spells in Knoxville, Tennessee, and Springfield, Missouri, they joined the cast

more by the sacrifices, and I felt they were all worth it. My daddy used to tell us when we were little girls: 'There is a world out there and you are going to see it'.

As the eldest, Helen had to be the most responsible sister. "I played the accordion," she said. "I have our way leads from the songs, except

Kenny, David and Kevin Jones, to establish themselves in country music. Kenny's precocious talent as a singer and songwriter was wiped out in a road accident when he was 16, but David joined his mother, grandmother, aunt Anita and cousin Lorie in a 1972 album called *The Carter Family: Three Generations*.

Some years later, during a show in Nashville, the country music MC Ralph Emery asked Helen, "I wonder if there is going to be a Carter Family in 2027?" "Well," said Helen, "if we have our way there will be, because all the children are just so talented." It was a typically selfless answer from a woman who might reasonably have expected to be there herself on that occasion, representing not only a remarkable family of musicians but the personal and professional values that sustained it. She is survived by her husband Glenn Jones, three sons, several grandchildren—and her sisters.

Tony Russell
Helen Carter Jones, country singer, born September 12, 1927; died June 2, 1998

A Country Diary

THE LIZARD: Past the high barbed-wire fence, surrounding RNAS Culdroe, the roadside is thick with fern, campion and sorrel, with masses of water hemlock on wetter verges. Whistling Jack grows on garden hedges in Lizard town and on the south-facing Point, invasive Hottentot fig cascades down the cliff, shocking pink above shoals of jagged black rocks and the turbulent swirling sea. Victorian travellers to nearby Kynance Cove rode down on donkeys or walked, part way on the dizzying path, perched on top of a stone-faced bank. Today's car-borne tourists are channelled from a cliff-top park, along a surfaced path,

away from former badly eroded cliffs, through the Cornish heath and salt-basted gorse, interspersed with vivid bloody crane-bill and dainty droop. At low-tide, huge serpentine boulders, encrusted with barnacles and limpets, draped with seaweed, are beached amongst white sand, beside translucent, towering waves. Walls of interconnected caves glisten red, grey and green above tide-scoured sandy floors and, off-shore, the rocky islets are covered with distinctive yellow lichens. By evening, most day visitors have left the Lizard: the village green is deserted of cars; polished serpentine

workshops, Anne's pasty shop and cafes selling crab sandwiches, burgers and cream teas, are closed. On the edge of town, the Demelza herd of creamy brown Jerseys cluster around the entrance to the most southerly milking parlour, backed by the sparkling sea. These dairy producers of rich milk were once widespread in west Cornwall. Later in the year, led by Survivor's Tulip, they will tread lightly across cliff land, on grazing managed by English Nature. Until then, swathes of an, punks flower untrampled by all except walkers along the coastal path.

VIRGINIA SPIERS

Birthdays

Eva Bartok, actress, 69; Michael Blakemore, theatre director, 70; Ian Carmichael, actor, 78; Derek Deane, artistic director, English National Ballet, 45; Carl de Winter, former secretary-general, Federation of British Artists, 54; Peter Donohue, pianist, 47; New Statesman, 47; Patricia Hutchinson, diplomat, 72; Roy Jackson, former assistant general secretary, TUC, 70; Sir Dennis Leeson, chairman, Unit Trust, 71; Sir Paul McCartney, singer, songwriter, 56; Paul Mayersberg, writer, 57; Isabella Rossellini, actress, 46; Delia Smith, television cook, 57; Linda Thorsen, actress, 51.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN OUR G2 cover story yesterday, Borders of hate, we inadvertently suggested that Milan Cathedral had assumed a dual faith role. A sentence on Page 3 read, "Outside the Duomo Mohammed, the city's main tourist attraction..." This should have read, "Outside the Duomo, the city's main tourist attraction, Mohammed, a tall, sleek Senegalese man..." On the following page, Al Habba Jaffra, "an asylum seeker who escaped from Iraq," was later allowed to say, "I came here (to Munich) from Iran to get away from police actions like this." He came from Iraq.

Guardian Higher Education, Page IV, June 16, we listed the accomplishments of Sir Ian McKellen as "actor, director, campaigner, peer of the realm..." He has been knighted but not yet ennobled.

IN THE Slogger column, Guardian Sport, Page 8, June 15, under the heading If... the writer speculates that a particular catch (Broadman at 18 instead of 187) would have created national euphoria and helped Churchill to win the 1947 General Election. There was no General Election between 1945 and 1950.

ON PAGE 6, Guardian Sport, June 16, under the headline,

Alarm bells for Glamorgan, we wrongly said that Glamorgan needed 312 to win, but "only just hung on" to draw. Glamorgan's target was in fact 222. At the close they were 258 for 8—14 short of victory.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 9599 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Surface mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

IN THE On Campus feature,

Executive Financial Editor: Ben Clissitt
Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

Join euro - or City suffers

Think-tank says 140,000 at risk

Jim Treanor

MORE than 140,000 British jobs could go if London loses its dominance as a financial centre following introduction of the single European currency, says an independent think-tank.

Most of the jobs lost would be in the City of London, which could lose the equivalent of half its current work-

force, according to a report published today by the Centre for Economics and Business Research.

It calculates that the European Union as a whole would also lose out, sending a clear signal to financial centres that they should be co-operating rather than competing.

London is the major financial services centre in Europe and, with New York and Tokyo, one of the world's three key financial centres. But, Britain's decision to remain

outside the "eurozone" has heightened debate that London's significance as a financial centre could be lost to Frankfurt or Paris if the pound remained outside the single currency for too long.

Approximately 250,000 people are employed in the financial services sector in London, which is home to more corporate headquarters than any other European city.

Today's report calculates that the City will lose business worth \$22.7 billion (\$14 billion) if its dominant position is eroded.

The report, commissioned by the Corporation of London, estimates that Britain's economy would contract by \$19.5 billion (\$12 billion), which represents 1.6 per cent of gross domestic product.

But Douglas McWilliams, the author of the report, believes that Frankfurt and Paris would not benefit from London's loss.

Only 43 per cent of the lost business would be transferred to other EU centres: 28 per cent would migrate to centres such as New York or Switzerland while 29 per cent would simply no longer take place because of the increased cost of doing business.

Mr McWilliams made his calculations by spreading the current disproportionate amount of financial activity which takes place in the City across each European country on the basis of GDP.

Jobs would also be lost in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and although other jobs

would be created, even the largest gainer, Spain, only gets 8,000 more jobs. As a result, the EU as a whole is forecast to lose a total of 116,000 jobs if the financial services sector in Europe is fragmented.

"Against this background and the natural desire of centres such as Paris and Frankfurt to increase their share of world financial markets, co-operation between European financial centres is clearly a preferable way forward," said Jeremy Seddon, chief executive of British Invisibles, which promotes financial services in the UK.

The report exposed a higher than expected degree of interdependence between Europe and London.

It found that about one-sixth of the jobs in the City

depended on customers from other EU countries, while about 61,000 jobs in the City were dependent in some way on EU economies.

However, the report does not see the City's position under threat for the foreseeable future, although it warns against complacency.

"The euro could be a threat but should be taken as an opportunity for the City to boost its European role," Mr McWilliams said.

While the report did not make any judgment on Britain's stance towards the single currency, Sir Brian Urwin, president and chairman of the European Investment Bank, last night told a City audience that it was not in Britain's long-term interests to stay outside.

Notebook

Expect little from smug bankers



Edited by Lisa Buckingham

THEY must be feeling pretty smug round at Threadneedle Street. After the deluge of approval following the latest decision to increase interest rates, the Bank of England's monetary policy committee yesterday appeared to have been vindicated.

The increase in average earnings from 4.9 per cent to 5.2 per cent seemed to support the case for raising rates, the committee said. The underlying year-on-year rise in wages was 4.2 per cent in February and March, and 4.5 per cent in April.

But the monetary policy committee should not be too complacent. Yesterday's labour-market data showed the first rise in claimant unemployment for two years. The increase was a minute 1.700 and could be revised away easily next month. It does square, however, with a range of other indicators pointing to a slow-down in economic growth.

Once the dele queue starts getting longer, wage inflation will quickly evaporate.

The renewed strength of sterling will also help to offset some of the inflationary pressures emerging from the labour market.

Although the Chancellor's recently announced public spending plans represent a significant relaxation of fiscal policy - which may, on the face of it, be an inflationary worry - the additional spending does not begin to kick in until next year, by which time the British economy could find itself flirting with recession.

The monetary policy committee has acquired a reputation for surprises, but the odds must be that members will sit on their hands at next month's meeting.

Then there are those who have contacted the Guardian to complain about the capital-gains tax bill they will face on their windfall profit. The problem is easily solved by giving the proceeds to charity, of course.

Then there are the retired and overseas members. Had they known of the impending handout, they say, they would not have quit.

There are probably many thousands more people who have changed what would have been winning Lottery numbers the week before they would have won the jackpot.

There are probably even more thousands of shareholders who have sold shares the week before a takeover bid would have given them huge overnight profits.

There are undoubtedly many widows whose husbands have died just days after retiring, thereby robbing them of lucrative death-in-service benefits.

There are probably hundreds of thousands of people who wish that they had not closed that building society account just before the society announced its flotation or sale plans.

None of these losers has so far launched legal action to redress the situation.

When there is £35,000 on the line, it is a bitter pill to swallow - but some you win and some you lose.

Bad loan day

THE proposed flotation of investment bank Goldman Sachs cannot come a moment too soon for Japan's Sumitomo Bank. As Goldman's biggest outside shareholder Sumitomo - which is now suffering from Japan's sick bank syndrome - could put many of its troubles behind it.

Sumitomo took a 10 per cent stake in Goldman for \$500 million more than a decade ago - long before the Wall Street partnership became the goldmine of today.

But the Japanese bank's fortunes have faded as those of its investment have blossomed. After being forced to write off \$7.1 billion in problem loans earlier this year, there is now talk that the bank could face further write-downs. The credit-rating agency Moody's is now considering downgrading Sumitomo's credit because of the bad loan experience.

If Goldman floats, however, Sumitomo's stake could be worth between \$2.5 billion and \$3 billion.

Under Japan's accounting rules, the bank would not have to sell the stake to take advantage of the added value. Equity holdings can be held in accounts either at the purchase price or at current market value.

On the basis of the latter, Sumitomo would be substantially closer to meeting the stricter capital requirements Japan is imposing.

Sumitomo also collects 12.5 per cent of Goldman's annual profits - worth \$375 million last year alone.

What a pity that equity seemed to evaporate when the bank turned its attention from investing to lending.

The greed club

THERE is nothing like the prospect of some free cash to bring out the worst in people, as present and former members of the Royal Automobile Club are demonstrating.

The \$250 million share of the cash the St James's club will receive from the sale of its breakdown and insurance operations to the American Centand group is being divided into equal portions of \$25,000 each to the club's 12,000 full members.

But already hundreds are crying foul.

The truly greedy life-long members believe they should get more than the Johnny-come-latelys. Some have calculated they should have \$750,000 a head.

£160m disc deal

Carlton puts digital video on fast forward

Chris Barrie, Media Business Correspondent

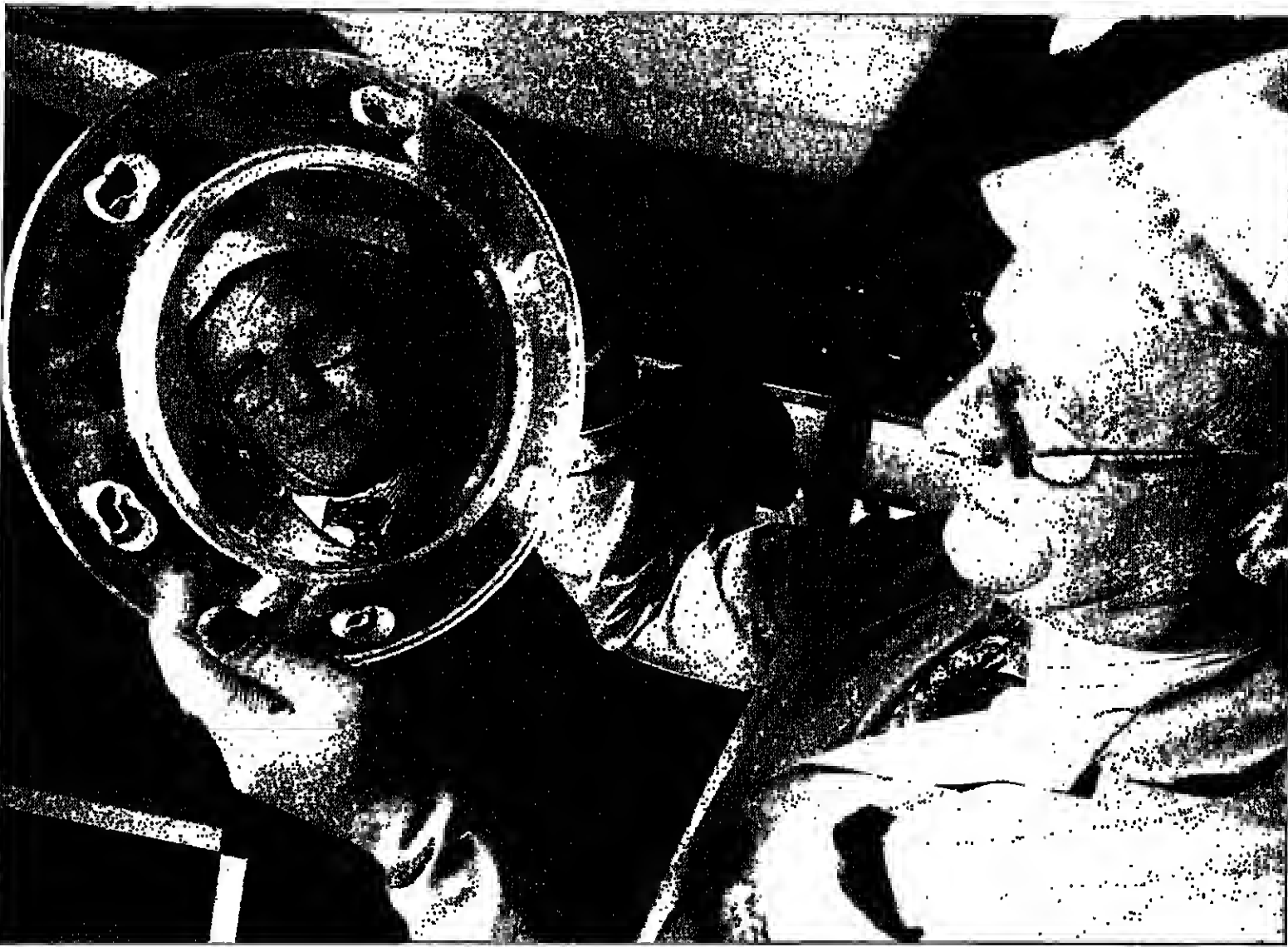
MEDIA company Carlton Communications has hastened its expansion into new digital technologies by announcing yesterday it is buying the optical disc maker Nimbus in a £160 million deal.

The purchase, backed by Nimbus shareholders and managers holding 44 per cent of the equity, will extend Carlton's capacity to produce and distribute digital data carriers.

Nimbus makes CDs and CD-ROMs, but Carlton is mainly interested in its burgeoning digital versatile disc (DVD) technology, which many see as the successor to video cassettes and CD-ROMs.

DVDs can store more information than conventional discs - 14 times more in the case of CD-ROM capacity - making them ideal for high-quality computer games, software and video storage.

The company cited market research suggesting that 2.5 billion DVD-ROMs would be sold per year in



New Image... Steve Marsh of Nimbus Manufacturing inspects a DVD master at the Cwmbran plant Carlton is buying

PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF MORGAN

the US and Europe by 2003, compared with one billion CD-ROMs now.

With plants in Wales, Luxembourg and on the east coast of the US, Nimbus will complement Carl-

ton's Technicolor sites, which also processes film for Hollywood studios. Carlton plans to merge Nimbus with Technicolor, which makes and distributes pre-recorded video cassettes as

well as CDs. Technicolor, which also processes film for Hollywood studios, recently announced it would increase its DVD capacity to 15 million units a year.

Based in Charlottesville, Virginia, Nimbus is increasing its capacity to 25 million units of DVD and other types of disc.

Carlton is offering shareholders \$11.50 (£7) for

every Nimbus share. The deal is expected to enhance Carlton's earnings in 1999 by some £10 million before savings. Nimbus made pre-tax profits of \$21 million last year.

Diamond crash spurs De Beers into crisis quotas

Dan Atkinson

DIAMOND sales worldwide crashed 41 per cent during the first half of 1998, sent into free-fall by the economic turmoil in Japan and the Far East. Gemstone group De Beers has responded with a range of crisis measures which include slapping tough quotas on most of the world's diamond mines.

Supplies to diamond-cutters and polishers have been severely squeezed, forcing them to use up to \$1 billion-worth (\$517 million) of their own stocks. Gemstone prices,

too, have been frozen for nearly two years.

One bright spot in the gloom, however, was retail jewellery demand in booming Britain, which soared 14 per cent in 1997, making it "the star of Europe", according to a De Beers spokesman.

Figures yesterday from the Central Selling Organisation, the De Beers arm that markets about 80 per cent of the world's diamonds, showed sales of \$1.7 billion during the first half of 1998, down 41 per cent on the record \$2.8 billion clocked up during the first half of last year.

The CSO had hoped - in

common with many other observers - that Japan's troubled economy was turning the corner last year, and that new sales records lay ahead.

But continuing Japanese problems linked with the meltdown in economies which provided lucrative gemstone markets - including Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines - sent sales into a nose-dive in the second half of last year, to \$1.5 billion, against \$2 billion during the same period of 1998.

Worse was to come with continuing crisis during the first half of this year. Japan,

which once accounted for 30 per cent of jewellery demand, accounts for only 24 per cent; the United States has boosted its share from 30 per cent to 34 per cent.

The slump means that De Beers has had to intervene actively on the diamond markets to buy up surplus supplies. Its own stockpile has already increased from \$4.1 billion in the middle of last year to \$4.4 billion by March this year, and continues growing all the time.

Despite the disappointment over the false dawn in Japan, the CSO's difficulties are not unprecedented. Sales stagnat-

ed in the recession of the early 1980s to the extent that there was no price increase at all from February 1983 to November 1985. The 1990s has seen a series of problems for the organisation, from Russian diamond smuggling through the civil war in Angola to recessions in Britain, America and Europe.

Elsewhere in the world, demand has been strengthening in mainland Europe as it emerges from recession and has continued to boom in the US, Canada and India. Even in the Far East, China and Taiwan have maintained "reasonable" sales levels.



RAC case opens with politburo jibe

Julia Finch

OVERSEAS and retired members, who have been cut out of the Royal Automobile Club's \$460 million cash handout, accused the club's committee of "gross unfairness and discrimination" yesterday.

Lawyers acting for up to 1,500 former members - who each want a \$25,000 share of the windfall - compared the RAC's committee to the old Soviet Union's ruling politburo. They said the sale of the RAC breakdown and insurance division had been handled "badly and inequitably" and accused the committee of breaching club rules.

They also suggested that the number of new members

admitted just ahead of the deadline was unusually high and said it was unfair that new members should get payouts.

Among those is Robert Ayling, the chief executive of British Airways. Lord Marshall, the chairman of BA, was elected to the board of the RAC in March.

The former members are launching four separate legal actions. Their claims centre on a club rule which they say allows overseas and retired members to request automatic reinstatement as full members at any time. The former members have been told they can rejoin the club and use its facilities, which include the RAC's St James's clubhouse and two Surrey golf courses, but they won't

get any of the cash. "It is like being a non-person in the old Soviet Union," said Stephen Alexander of solicitors Epstein Grower.

He said that the RAC's rules obliged the committee to keep members informed of club business. "If the committee had done so, all the overseas and retired members could have applied for reinstatement," he said.

Mr Alexander claimed that the club's rules did not allow the committee to hand out any cash to members and that all profits had to be donated to charity.

One hundred RAC "widows", whose late husbands died before the cut-off date for reinstatement, are also campaigning for a share of the cash.

The legal action comes as

the RAC holds the first of two members' meetings to approve the sale - to the US Centand corporation - and the cash share-out.

Yesterday Mr Alexander asked members to consider the former members who have missed out. He said if they voted to include them in the payout, it would cost them just \$5,000 each.

Last night the RAC hit back at the ex-members' claims. A spokesman for the committee called the allegation that members had not been kept informed "utter rubbish".

He said that fewer new members had been admitted this year than in 1997 and claimed that the rule requiring cash to go to charity applied only if the clubhouse was sold.

Thorn begins break-up with sale of writ-laden US firm

Roger Cowe

THORN, the troubled electrical retailer which owns Radio Rentals in Britain, began a break-up of the group yesterday with the sale of the US operation to its main rival in America, Renters Choice.

The 1,400-outlet Rent-A-Center chain is to be sold for \$900 million (\$548 million), most of which eventually will be paid out to shareholders.

The disposal is the first step in the restructuring announced last month which is intended to restore the company's fortunes. It could turn Thorn into a takeover target, however, because the buyer is accepting liability for legal actions against the chain.

Rent-A-Center has been the

target of actions in a series of states over its high interest rates, and the threat of multi-million-dollar payments is thought to have deterred some potential bidders.

Thorn reported that it had received a bid approach in April but has refused to divulge further details and said yesterday that there was nothing new to report.

Chief executive Steve Marshall said the sale to Renters Choice could take months to complete, after which the priority was to dispose of other peripheral businesses in Asia and Europe.

Those disposals are expected to take at least a year, after which Thorn will be left with only its Radio Rentals, trading as Radio Rentals, DIER and Crazy George.

Bio chief to face inquiry by MPs

Julia Finch and Lisa Buckingham

THE chief executive of the beleaguered British Biotech drug development company is today expected to be summoned before MPs to explain the scandal that has engulfed the company in the past two months.

Dr Keith McCullagh, who has agreed to step down after pressure from shareholders who have seen the value of their shares slump from 300p to just 39p after a string of damaging allegations, will be forced to answer searching questions about whether the company's two key drug projects have any prospect of success.

The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee is expected to announce this morning that it is launching a detailed inquiry into events at the company. They include claims from a former employee that the company's key drugs will never work and criticism of certain of Dr McCullagh's share deals.

A spokesman admitted that MPs were concerned that the scandal might damage the credibility and financial standing of Britain's entire biotechnology industry.

The Select Committee, which on Tuesday launched an unprecedented attack on the senior executives of Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham for their failure to deliver a merger, has clearly now decided that it wants a full account from British Bio.

"If there is an inquiry, we will be very happy to co-operate," the spokesman said.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Australia 2.72 | Germany 2.885 | Malaysia 6.59 | Singapore 2.80 |
| Austria 20.34 | Greece 491.40 | Malta 0.852 | South Africa 8.59 |
| Belgium 22.57 | Hong Kong 12.44 | Netherlands 3.24 | Spain 243.87 |
| Canada 2.35 | India 69.86 | New Zealand 3.23 | Sweden 13.00 |
| Cyprus 0.847 | Ireland 1.1375 | Norway 12.29 | Switzerland 2.67 |
| Denmark 11.09 | Israel 6.09 | Portugal 254.03 | Turkey 415.020 |
| Finland 8.87 | Italy 1.254 | Saudi Arabia 3.10 | USA 1.004 |
| France 6.67 | | | |

Supplied by Reuters (excluding rupee, shilling and malagasy)

Royal Ascot

Treble noble day for Sir Michael

Chris Hawkins reports on a 419-1 hat-trick for Stoute and rider Swinburn

A KNIGHTHOOD one week, a Royal Ascot treble the next life for Sir Michael Stoute could hardly be sweeter. Exclusive and Walter Swinburn started it all yesterday by beating the 5-1 favourite Zalaiya in the Coronation Stakes and it was just like old times when Maridour, carrying the Aga Khan's colours, hung on for a short-head win in the Queen's Vase.

Then Swinburn, who had not ridden a winner at the Royal meeting for three years, powered home Greek Palace at 9-1 in the Bessborough Stakes to make it a 419-1 hat-trick.

Stoute seldom lets his guard drop but he admitted he was surprised and thrilled by his nomination in the Queen's Birthday honours — though presumably not as surprised as by the victory of the 5-1 chance Maridour. Stoute had earlier given out Henry Cecil's Capt, who finished a short head and 1½ lengths back in third, as his nap of the day.

The 11-8 favourite led two out but could not keep up the gallop and Swinburn brought Maridour with what looked a perfectly timed challenge, although a late burst from the 20-1 outsider Lauretelle all but succeeded.

Exclusive third to Cape Verdi in the 1,000 Guineas proved too strong at odds of 5-1 for the French Guineas winner Zalaiya in the Coronation Stakes, with Swinburn riding a masterly waiting race to prove that he has lost none of his touch during his self-imposed absence.

"I'm enjoying my riding more now and everything seems to be pretty level at the moment," said Swinburn. "My weight's good and it's up to me to keep it that way."

Another singing in the rain at the meeting's second day was the Newmarket trainer James Eustace after his 20-1 shot Refuge To Love became his first Royal Ascot winner in the Hunt Cup.

"Winning races like this means everything," said Eustace. "It's wonderful for a small yard like ours with just 23 horses. The feeling is indescribable. I can't believe it."

Refuge To Love lived right up to his rebus name and was only cornered by the stalls with enormous patience. Once in he could hardly wait to get out and Jason Tate had him in front on the stands rails from the off — and there he obstinately stayed, despite the determined challenge of the 6-1 favourite Fly To The Stars in the final furlong.

For Tate it was a first Royal Ascot winner but the 26-year-old jockey had little time to reflect on it, having to boot-foot it to Nottingham's evening meeting. "He's a brilliant rider and I can't understand why he doesn't get more outside chances," said Eustace, who has been training for eight years.

Mike Channon called on some of his old football skills as he skidded and side-stepped his way through the throng to welcome home Bint Allay after his filly had justified a huge home reputation and 2-1 favoritism in the Queen Mary Stakes.

All the dogs were barking this filly before she set foot on a racecourse but when that day came she failed. Pipaloo best her a neck at York but yesterday Bint Allay took her revenge by two lengths.

"With two-year-olds no matter how good they look at home you can never tell," said Channon. "They're babies and when they get to the course they get beat because they don't know what to do."

Bint Allay, ridden by Frankie Dettori, knew a lot more this time and was not fully extended here to add to her victory in last month's National Stakes at Sandown. Channon sees her staying six furlongs without difficulty.



Cross to bear... Kevin McKenzie replaces Gordon Bulloch for Scotland's second Test against Australia. JAMIE MACDONALD

Cricket

County Championship: Sussex v Warwickshire

Spring returns to Knight's step as Sussex toil

David Hopps at Hove

NICK KNIGHT'S championship season has been so sketchy of late that he could hardly be expected to join England's depleted ranks at Lord's yesterday, but it was still galling for him to learn that cover had been found for three ailing Test batsmen and he had not received as much as an early-morning call.

For England's finest one-day batsman, life over four days this season has been largely excruciating, but he summoned up a respectable response as he joined his fellow Warwickshire opener

Michael Powell in despatching the Sussex attack with hundreds aplenty in an opening stand of 272.

Warwickshire's status as pre-season championship favourites has been followed by four defeats in six matches, and apologies from their captain Brian Lara for not entirely keeping his mind on the job. Exile from a mess of their own making was long overdue and centuries for both batsmen achieved it as they closed on 276 for one.

Powell's maiden first-class century was generally the more fluent. After a wretched 1997, he has abandoned his baseball stance and has

rebuilt his technique under the tuition of Warwickshire's second-team coach Neil Aberkane. His 132, a composed affair possessing a decent range of strokes, suggested that he has done so prudently.

Championship starts at 1.00pm might be expected to befuddle even the best opening batsmen. Largely creatures of habit, their daily routine has remained unchanged for years: breakfast by 8.30, in the nets an hour later, a quick glance at the Telegraph crossword and then strap on the pads to begin the entire rigmarole again.

Warwickshire, though, are becoming bad hands at this late-start nonsense. Last

week, at Bristol, half the side had a lie-in, inadvertently missed breakfast, and existed for most of the day on a diet of Otis Spunkmeyer muffins, not thought to be on England's list of recommended nutritional substances.

For Knight, in any event, the start of every innings has recently felt more like five in the morning, his feet moving reluctantly as if he has just dragged himself out of bed to make an unwilling trip to the bathroom.

He was fortunate to survive several early intrusions through slip and gully. By the time he secured his half-century on the stroke of lunch, he could console himself that

the edges were thicker and more controlled. It was 4.30 before he unveiled his first flowing shot, successive on-drives and cuts against Mark Robinson.

The pitch was fairly sedate, and Sussex's seam attack rarely located the form that has carried them to third in the championship.

Powell, dropped by Wasim Khan in the gully off Mark Robinson when 21, was their only victim, a leading edge against the same bowler falling gently to extra cover.

Knight was 115 not out when bad light caused play to be suspended 12 overs early at eight o'clock.

Free admission after six

Don Beet

DAVID BOON, Durham's 37-year-old Australian captain, batted for 332 minutes in the Riverside sun to shine yesterday to reach an unbeaten 120 out of 311 for seven as a depleted Yorkshire attack struggled to justify David Byas's decision to field first.

Byas was also guilty of dropping Boon at slip on 12, and in the absence of Darren Gough, Chris Silverwood and Craig White Yorkshire were unable to press home their advantage after Paul Hutchings had reduced Durham to 112 for four.

The 21-year-old left-arm took three wickets in two excellent spells but Durham were able to profit from the inexperience of Matthew Hoggar and Ryan Sidebottom as Boon shared stands of 69 with

Jason Gallian and Tim Robinson compiled an unbroken third-wicket stand of 130 by the time rain ended play against Kent at Canterbury with the visitors 184 for two.

Matthew Downman and Usman Akmal departed cheaply but Gloucestershire were 54 and Nottinghamshire were 54 for two before Gallian (74 not out) and Robinson, unbeaten on 54, set about the Kent attack.

Only 50 minutes' play was possible at Worcester, where Gloucestershire scored 37 without loss in 11.4 overs against Worcestershire, and Essex might have wished they had never started at Bath. In the 8.2 overs played Somerset reached 45 without

loss as the visitors conceded 24 extras. Ashley Rowe a bowled seven no-balls in three overs that cost him 34.

No play was possible between Northamptonshire and Middlesex at Northampton.

Boon shines in the sun

Don Beet

DAVID BOON, Durham's 37-year-old Australian captain, batted for 332 minutes in the Riverside sun to shine yesterday to reach an unbeaten 120 out of 311 for seven as a depleted Yorkshire attack struggled to justify David Byas's decision to field first.

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Punters to be pleased as Punch

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Laura Thompson witnesses an emotional coronation for the brave filly **Exclusive**

that passionless veneer. The rain had a hand in this. It turned a high-glamour Group One for high-stepping fillies into a real rattle, in which Exclusive — who has been improving all season and absolutely earned her day of glory — was magnificently repelled her close challengers. No sunlit case for her; she looked as brave as any Gold Cup winner at the end.

And there will be no lovelier sight at this meeting than that of Exclusive arriving in the sodden winner's enclosure with Walter Swinburn on her back. It seems that Royal Ascot does have feelings, after all.

Results

Smith, who has had nine doubles and was landing his first three-timer, said: "I needed that as I've been around quite a long time and people don't know that this is

ROYAL ASCOT
2.30 (77): 1, DIKTAT, D Holland (3-1 fav);
2, Bold Edge (14-1); 3, Lowers Knot (8-1);
4, Ron D. (2-1) (D Loder) Total: £3.60; £1.80,
£3.80, £2.20, Dual F: £30.50, Trio: £135.40,
CSF: £3.68, NRT Rabl.

2.45 (68): 1, BELL ALLAY, L Dettori (3-1
fav); 2, Pipelink (9-4); 3, Coralita (12-1);
4, 7 ran 2, 3. (M Channon) Total: £2.40; £1.30,
£1.20, £3.60, Dual F: £2.40, Trio: £14.40, CSF:
£2.40.

445 (1m); 1, EXCLUSIVE, WR Swinburn
5-1; 2, Zalesky (5-4 fav); 3, Winona
6-10. 3 run 1 $\frac{1}{2}$, K. (M Skalde) Totc: \$5.70.
1.80, C1.23, E3.80. Duf F: E4.10. Tfr:
\$23.50 CSP: \$9.42, NR: Grazia.

450 (1m); 1, REFUSE TO LOSE, J Tals
2-1; 2, Fly To The Stars [6-1]; 3, Zele
Princess of My Heart (40-1); 4, Superlat
Wv. 11. 23 = 12.00. Total:

00-17. 32 RM 1A 23. A 12 E500000 100E:
20-17: \$2.80, £1.90, £2.60, £1.80, £1.80. Dual F:
\$40.60. Tr: £1,485.80. CSF: £100.13. Tr
Cost: \$3,000.15.

00-55 (2m 45yds) 1, MANDPOUR, W R
Win/Windum (S-1); 2, LARSEN (2D-1); 3,
MAGNETI (11-S fav); 8 ran Stk hd. 1% (M Stuhl)
Notes: \$8.20; \$2.00, £4.00, £1.10. Dual F:
\$39.90, CSF: £103.49.

00-30 (1m 40") 1, GREEK PALACE W R

winburn (9-1); 2, *Salvadora* (100-30 fav); 3, *Winged Hammer* (12-1); 4, *Shift of Light* (12-1), 20 ran. 1X, 6. (M. Stoute) **Tote:** £16.50; £3.20, £1.40, £3.00. **Duel F:** £20.80. **SP:** £35.30, Tricast: £351.87.

HAADPOT: £9.30
LACHPOT: £15.80
BACKPOT: Not won, £103,105.28 carried over to Ascot today.

FAMILY

10 (1m segs); 1, 1mss 20-22, 1/10
10 (10-11 fvs); 3, Tempus Ltd (5-11; 3
serotens (33-11, 7 ran & 12 (B Hills) Tole
17.00; C1.00, 25.70. Dual F: £3.50. CSF: £6.96.
1.45 (1m 13 Sgds); 1, NORBY
JARRIS, Km Tinker (5-11; 3, High
Pines (7-2); 3, Saron Island (14-1), 5-2 J
vs Katie Komato & Segala. 6 ran 13, 2k
Don Enrico (mcs) Tole: £4.40; £2.10, £2.40.
Dual F: £6.60. CSF: £18.83.

50 (M 4yrds): 1, SWEET AS A BUT, J.D. Smith (5-2); **2, Discol Chm** (7-4 fav); **3, and Symphony** (2-1). 8 ran NK. (C. Wyrar) Totals: £3.10; £1.00, £1.20. Dual F: 77.70. CSF: £8.38. NR. Risky Experience.

55 (M 4yrds): 1, SUPERFICIAL, Kim Tucker (5-1); **2, Henry The Hawk** (7-4 fav); **3, Dava Falsa** (8-2). 8 ran Hd. 1% (Don Wricio Inca) Totals: £3.60; £3.60, £1.20.

70 Dual F: £34.00 CSF: £15.14.
 30 (6F Syds): 1, **KAISANT**, J D Smith.
 1-1: 2, **Miller Westwood** (11-2); 3, **Jeddy**
Anothered (9-4 fav). 10 ran £.
 Martyn Wans) Tote: £13.50; £3.60, £2.00.
 40 Dual F: £23.20. Trio: £25.20. CSF:
 £24. Tricost: £119.15.
 105 (1m 5F Syds): 1, **URGENT REPLY**, J
 Toboob (10-1). 3, **Old Hawk Wing** (7-1)
 2-1. 5. **Wanted** (2-1). 5. **Love** 2-1.

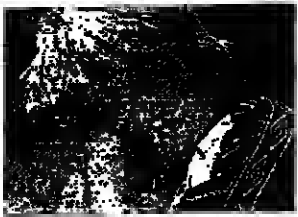
TOLVERHAMPTON
 20 (1st 44): 1, SODEN, 5 Whitworth
 -1): 2, By Jay (4-1); 3, Welcome (4-
 -1); 3, Welcome (4-1); 3, Welcome (4-1)

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05 (6-1), 1. **MANGLUS**, S Whitworth (B-1):
 Allx (6-1); 3, General Equation (14-1):
 4 fav Dominant Air 8 ran 1, 2, 1K Curo,
 (Brown-Brown) Tote: £14.80; £3.30, £1.80,
 .00, Dual F: £13.10. CSF: £52.78. Tricant:

40 (M): 1, ARBOR KALE, N Adams
2-1; 2, Five Ways Flyer (9-4); 3, Just
Lucky (6-1). 6-4 fav Pride of Londubh, 7
4-1, 1K (Horse) Totals: £13.30; £7.60, £1.30.
Cl F: £31.50. CSF: £35.51. NR: Risk One
rushing.
15 (1m 11 7/8yds): 1, SNIPELEY GREEN,
Duffield (4-7 fav); 2, Lynette (7-2); 3,
Carnegie (10-1). 4-1, 3, 2, 1.

ACEPOH £548.20.
WADPOH £18.60.



France 98

Wayward Asprilla backstabbed
Computer Dances 15
David Beckham on the path
of being left out 14
Austria scraps draw again 14

The Guardian Sport

Thursday June 18 1998 www.football.guardian.co.uk/worldcup

France 98



Off the mark... Luigi Di Biagio (centre) celebrates his first goal for Italy after a powerful header against Cameroon in Montpellier last night

Group B: Italy 2 Cameroon 0

Vieri lights blue touchpaper

Italy build up a head of steam with stylish double from their Atletico Madrid striker

ITALY moved up a gear and took a giant step towards the second round with Group B's first win after three draws. Goals in either half from Luigi Di Biagio — his first in the Azzurri jersey — and Christian Vieri, who struck twice in the final 15 minutes, were a fair reflection of the control they exerted through a sharper approach than in their opening game against Chile.

An early goal put the Italians in control and their cause was considerably helped when Cameroon were reduced to 10 men just before the interval when the defender Raymond Kalla was sent off for a foul.

Di Biagio rewarded Cesare Maldini's decision to include the Roma player in the starting line-up at the expense of Chelsea's Roberto Di Matteo when in the eighth minute he met a cross from Roberto Baggio with a glancing header that gave the Cameroon goal-

keeper Jacques Songo'o little chance.

Italy looked much sharper in the opening exchanges than they had during the 2-2 draw against Chile in Bordeaux last Thursday and could have extended their lead before half-time, with Christian Vieri in particular causing problems for the Cameroon defence.

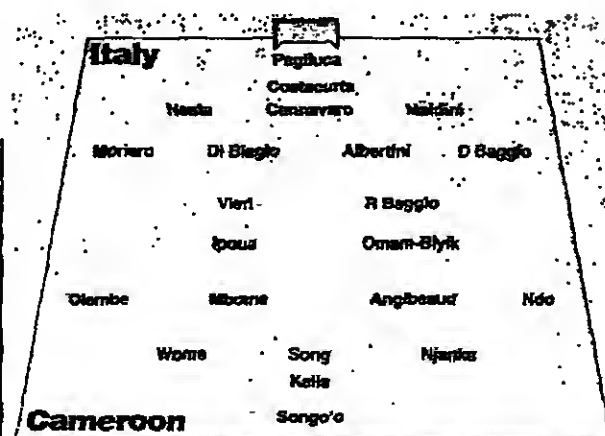
The Africans showed none of the verve that helped them to their 1-1 draw with Austria last week and failed to test Italy's goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca with a single clear-cut goalscoring chance.

The Africans did not show the verve of their draw with Austria

But Cameroon Kalla was moving forward with the ball when Di Biagio slid in to make a tackle. He took the ball but Kalla made a two-footed challenge that the Australian referee Edward Lennie considered dangerous and he pulled out the red card.

Di Biagio was taken off on a stretcher but returned just before the interval to the jeers of Cameroon fans. However as the players walked off at half-time, the Italian lifted his right leg of his shorts to show his injury to Songo'o and Cameroon's coach Claude Leroy as if to vindicate the referee's decision.

Cameroon introduced Lyon striker Joseph Desirée Job for Samuel Ipoja for the second half and began with more verve despite their numerical disadvantage. The neutrals, who made up the majority of the 35,500 capacity crowd, were fully behind the African side as Italy were forced on to the defensive.



Alessandro Nesta had to make a desperate last-ditch tackle on Patrick Mboma as the midfielder bore down on goal in the 56th minute and Pagliuca was at full stretch to tip over a Job drive seconds later.

Cesare Maldini was on his feet, screaming at his team to hold on to the ball, and he sent on Di Matteo for Demetrio Albertini in the 62nd

minute in an effort to settle his side.

Vieri then settled any Italian nerves when he cut in from the right and chipped home in the 75th minute. He added his second in the 80th minute, taking advantage of defensive hesitancy to score from close range.

● Faustino Asprilla was on his way home to Colombia last night after being thrown

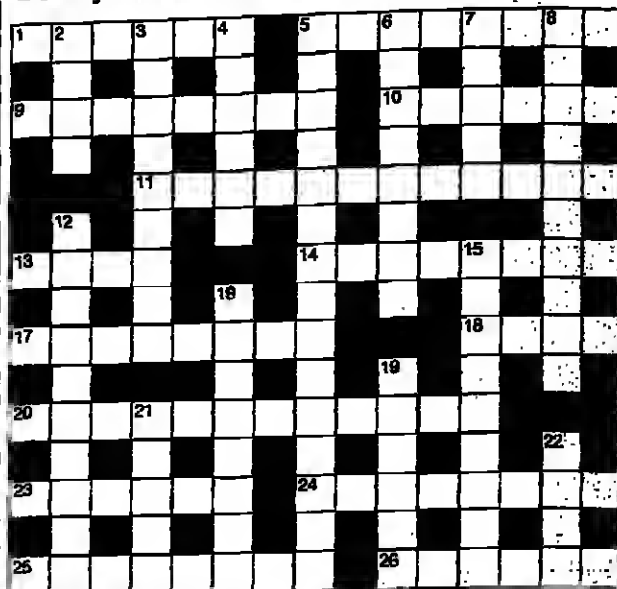
out of the World Cup squad for indiscipline. Even a plea for leniency from the country's president Ernesto Samper was not enough to save the temperamental striker who had broken a midnight curfew on Monday night after being substituted during the 1-0 Group D defeat by Romania. He had further angered his coach Hernan Gomez by giving an interview to a Spanish radio journalist in which he said that certain players were being given preferential treatment — thought to be a reference to the 36-year-old Carlos Valderrama. The Colombian federation said the Parma player had boarded a plane in Paris bound for Bogota via Miami.

Federación president Alvaro Fina told reporters that he had given Gomez his full backing after Asprilla criticised the coach's World Cup tactics on a Colombian radio programme on Tuesday. Speaking outside Colombia's World Cup retreat near Lyon, Fina said: "This was the straw that broke the camel's back."

Michael Walker, page 15

Guardian Crossword No 21,304

Set by Araucaria



Across

- 1 See 10
- 5 The pudding is a lemon soufflé (8)
- 9 Companion in review takes on admirable character (8)
- 10, 14 Witches granted representation at the opera? (6,6)
- 11, 14 Gap with stone read by mathematician (12,8)
- 13 Game explorer (4)
- 14 See 11 and 16
- 17 Voice a Greek cry that asked for the lead (8)
- 18 The attraction of gunfighting? (4)
- 20 Later number among the more sentimental extends from Essex (8,4)
- 23 Unusual US term for a forgery (6)
- 24 Essentially American order? (5,3)
- 25, 26 Boxer, managed by swimmer, not at home to highwayman (8,6)

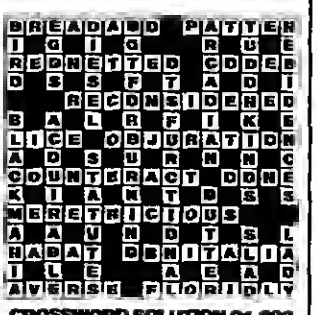
Down

- 2 Offhand I'd say the windows are open (4)
- 3 In Latin a 10th is about 2 — from such there'll be a fall (9)
- 4 Pass on the information unless the Yard is short (6)

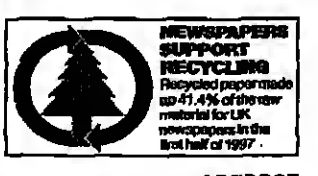
- 5 End the case often? Let's hope not (8,2,5)
- 6 Girl having a terrible time among frightening little beasts? (8)
- 7 Look at the tank! It's green (5)
- 8 Forced my Italian granny to take a little time on the range (3-7)
- 12 Mob's bit of "corpore sano" upsetting creative skills (4,6)
- 15 Not enough friction? That could be a slip (9)
- 16, 14 Altering new vocation, keeping copper American, a summary process (8,8)
- 19 Sticker for monkey allowed outside (6)
- 21 Fearful and faint, it's going up (8)
- 22 The road to Michigan, maybe from 10 1 (4)

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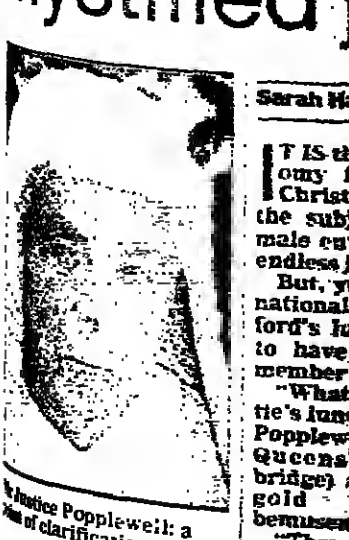
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